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THE

ASSEMBLIES OF AL ḤARÎRI

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The difficulty of the Arabic language has, however, confined the thorough study of it to very few, to the detriment of all Oriental learning. It is with the desire to smooth the path of the student that I have undertaken to translate and annotate the work of the most learned and eloquent of the Arabic authors. A translation may have two objects; it may be either intended to display the translator's felicity of diction, as when scholars produce English versions of Anacreon or Horace for the amusement of those who are well acquainted with the originals, a pursuit for which I cannot say that I have any high esteem; or it may be intended to facilitate the study of a difficult original, while it gives the translator's countrymen generally some acquaintance with a foreign author who deserves to be known by them, though they cannot hope to learn his language. The latter has been the object proposed in the present translation. It is a literal prose rendering of the Maḳâmât, intended primarily to help the student in Arabic, and with this view I have always guarded myself from being seduced into paraphrase by the desire of elegance. The text of the author has been rendered throughout as closely as is consistent with intelligibility; but the translation will, I believe, have lost nothing thereby, for readers of true taste will prefer that the idiom of the original, strange and uncouth as

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it sometimes may be, should pierce through the version, rather than that Ḥarîri's diction should be, as it were, melted down and remoulded into the current English of the nineteenth century.

In this version there is no attempt to imitate the plays on words, or the rhyme of the original. Such a resemblance in form could only be attained by the abandonment of all accuracy, and the sacrifice of the chief object for which the translation has been undertaken. But the parallelistic rhythm of the original has been sufficiently preserved, and on the whole the reader will be able to gain from this version a fair idea of the form in which Ḥarîri cast his thoughts. If I have adopted at times a somewhat antiquated diction it has been naturally suggested by the work itself. One of the earliest students of the Assemblies, the learned and critical Albert Schultens, perceived the essential character of Ḥarîri's style. He says, "Hæ faces quicquid tenebrarum stilus Haririi grandisonus ac mille floribus figurisque variegatus offundebat discussere, laborem quem in eo, a capite ad calcem, describendo impendebam compensante summâ animi voluptate; eo quod hôc in scriptore reperirem id quod spe atque cogitatione præceperam, eminentem et expressam imaginem priscæ illius grandiloquentiæ Orientalis, quâ liber Jobi exaratus est, quæque in Psalmis, in Proverbiis, in reliquo cor-

pore Bibliorum, poetico præsertim, ac prophetico, tam magnificè tamque insignitè se exerit."

The notes have been primarily designed for the student, but care has been taken that the allusions in the text shall be sufficiently explained for the general reader. (The legends of the heroic warriors of the Ignorance, *Αραβίας ἄρειον ἄνθος*, their proverbial utterances, their genealogies, their feuds, their Days or battles, their usages and habits of life, are illustrated from many sources, and references are given which will further aid the student. As this pagan antiquity was one of the chief studies of the learned, and its influence largely pervades the Assemblies, some knowledge of it is necessary to a reader of Ḥarîri.) In the grammatical notes I have throughout followed the system of the Arabs, being convinced of the futility of the efforts which have been made by European scholars to remould the Arabic grammar on the principles of the Latin; to say nothing of the necessity that the student should understand the grammatical and rhetorical terms of the native writers, without a knowledge of which their commentaries and explanations are unintelligible. In some of the notes, as those to the Twenty-fourth Assembly, rather abstruse questions are discussed, but they will have no exceeding difficulty to any one who has taken the right road in learning the language.

In writing Arabic names and words with European letters I have desired to combine sufficient accuracy with such a representation of the word as shall not be pedantic or uncouth. The Arabic scholar will soon perceive the system that has been adopted. *Fethah* is represented by *a* or *e*, and *dammah* by *o* or *u*, *kesreh* being represented by *i*. The long syllables are indicated by *â*, *î*, *û*. In non-Arabic names I have generally followed the popular spelling, as it is to be found in European books; some well-known names also, as Basra, Kufa, Medina, Mecca, are written in the same manner. Following high authority I have paid no attention to the *i'râb* in composite Arabic names. Notwithstanding all the care that has been bestowed on the proofs, it will be found that the subscribed points and other signs by which the Arabic letters are indicated in English type have been occasionally omitted or misplaced. These inaccuracies are, however, few and trifling.

The present volume contains a long Introduction, which dispenses with the necessity of saying more in this place; it contains also the opening Address of Ḥarîri, and the first twenty-six Assemblies. With the second volume there will be published an Index to the entire work.

ERRATA.

Page 12, line 12, for *mezdûj* read *muzdawij*.

Page 41, line 28, and page 86, line 15, *for* Muzayḳîah *read* Muzayḳiyâ.

Page 101, line 26, *for* Laudian *read* Lord Almoner's.

Page 472, line 22, *after* any other *read* than a.

INTRODUCTION.

BETWEEN the civilizations of Christendom and Islam there is a gulf which no human genius, no concourse of events, can entirely bridge over. The most celebrated Orientals, whether in war or policy, in literature or learning, are little more than names for Europeans. A student here and there, weary of the beaten track of Greek and Roman antiquity, may wander into the paths of Eastern knowledge, but to the great number of educated men they appear but an impassable jungle, into which it is wearisome and useless to penetrate. The transcendant difficulty of the chief language of the Mohammedan world, and the belief that it represents only an arrested civilization and a decaying religion, are sufficient to turn the intelligence of the West to what appear to be more open and more profitable fields. For these reasons it is necessary that even the most esteemed and famous of Arabic writers should be introduced by an English translator as if they were almost unknown to his countrymen. I may assume without danger that this is the case with Al Ḥarîri, of Basra. This eminent man of letters

has been rewarded with a fame such as few have ever obtained. For more than seven centuries his work has been esteemed as, next to the Koran, the chief treasure of the Arabic tongue. Contemporaries and posterity have vied in their praises of him. His "Assemblies" have been commented with infinite learning and labour in Andalusia, and on the banks of the Oxus. His poetry has been sung at the feasts of the great, and by the camel-drivers in the desert. To appreciate his marvellous eloquence, to fathom his profound learning, to understand his varied and endless allusions, have always been the highest object of the literary, not only among the Arabic-speaking peoples, but wherever the Arabic language has been scientifically studied. But the very qualities which have procured him this extraordinary reputation among his countrymen and co-religionists, have hindered the extension of it elsewhere. His genius is, by its nature, so bound up with the structure and traditions of the Arabic language, of which his chief work may be said to be a compendium, that the Orientalists of Europe have shrunk from the difficulties of translation, and have even been unwilling to dwell upon merits which it is impossible that those whom they addressed should ever understand. One important exception is, however, to be noticed. German literature has been enriched with a brilliant imitation of the Assemblies, by the gifted Rückert. But in spite of this great service to Ḥarîri's reputation, he may be said to be almost unknown to the Western world. I propose, therefore, to devote a few pages to his life and times, to the character of the work which I have undertaken to translate, and annotate, and

to the class of literature of which it is the most eminent example.[1]

Abû Moḥammed al Ḳâsim ibn 'Alî ibn Mohammed ibn 'Othmân al Ḥarîri was born at Basra, in the year 446 of the Hijra (A.D. 1054 or 1055), and he died in 515 (1121–2), or 516 (1122–3), in his native city. His life was, therefore, contemporary with the first Crusade, and the irruptions of the Christian hosts added much to the political troubles amid which his lot was cast. The whole aspect of the Mohammedan world had changed since the days when Basra, with its sister and rival city Kufa, had been founded by the victorious Arabs of 'Omar's Khalifate. Power had passed away from the Arab race in Syria and Irak; military enterprise had decayed, or existed only in the primitive form of the *ghazw* or foray. The intellectual vigour, as well as the political supremacy, of the Arabs was waning in those regions. The Abbasside Khalifs of the eleventh century were almost as much the shadows of former power as the Emperors of the East; they retained little more than their religious supremacy. In the boyhood of Ḥarîri, Toghril Beg, the grandson of Seljuk, had been confirmed by the powerless Khalif Al Ḳa 'im bi-amr allah, in all his conquests, loaded with honours, saluted as King of the East and West, and endowed with the hand of the Khalif's daughter. In the next reign, that of Al Muḳtadi, the Seljuk Turks captured Jerusalem, and by their outrages against the Christian pilgrims, excited the Western nations to the Crusade. At the time when the

[1] In treating of the life of Ḥarîri, I have, availed myself largely of the facts brought together by M.M. Reinaud and Derenbourg, in their preface to the second edition of De Sacy's Ḥarîri.

young Ḥarîri was imbuing his mind with the learning of his forefathers, his race had in Irak and Syria been subjected to a foreign domination, and the power of the Turks had been extended from the Bosphorus to the Persian Gulf and the Indus.

The lot of the Arabs subjected to Turkish domination does not, however, seem to have been a hard one. The rulers felt their own barbarism, and had some reverence for the genius and learning of those they governed. These had not been conquered, in the military sense of the term. Their government had fallen to Turkoman administrators, through the weakness of the successors of the Prophet; but the sanctity of the Khalif was still felt, and his supremacy nominally acknowledged. The influence of religion maintained for the Arab-speaking inhabitants of Irak a sufficient, and even an excessive, respect. The Koṛan, the revealed word of God himself, had existed from eternity in the Arabic language, and to understand and explain it was the privilege of those only who were versed in the mysteries of Arabic grammar and divinity. While to the boldest soldier of the dominant race the sacred book was unintelligible, and served only as an amulet to keep off Jinn and Ghûls, and the like supernatural enemies, the poorest Bedouin who wandered in from the desert could appreciate its doctrine and precepts, its lofty diction, its refined and learned grammar, its entrancing rhythm, and feel the full assurance that such a masterpiece of language could only have been communicated from on high. In accepting Islam, the Turks had also accepted the authority of the Koran, in religious and civil matters, and that authority could be expounded only by *Fuḳahâ*, or jurisconsults,

who had studied the Arabic text, by *Mutekellimûn*, or scholastic divines, or by the followers of the great Imams, who had fixed the rites of public worship. Nor was the influence of the learned Arabs merely religious. Their literature and science were dominant in the East, and their vocabulary leavened the languages of the races with whom they came in contact. The extent of this influence may be perceived by comparing the Persian of Firdousi with that of Sa'di. The language of the former, who flourished in the early part of our eleventh century, is tolerably pure, while the Gulistan, which was produced some two hundred and fifty years later, is in some places little more than a piecing together of Arabic words with a cement of the original tongue. It is to be noticed, also, that the latter author introduces continually Arabic verses, as the highest ornaments of his work, and assumes that his readers are acquainted with this classic and sacred tongue. In the time of Ḥarîri this influence was in full power: nor was the political supremacy of the Arabs at an end. Though the Khalifate of Bagdad had fallen on evil days, yet the Arab rule was still vigorous in Spain, and the wide-spread race still asserted a high place in arms and government, as well as in letters. In Asia the Arabs were to the northern invaders all, and more than all, that the Greeks were to the Romans. Melek Shah, the son and successor of Alp Arslan, was, under the guidance of his Wazîr, Niẓâm al Mulk, a patriotic prince. The finances were restored, oppressive taxes were taken off, commerce was facilitated by the construction of roads, canals, and market-places; person and property were made secure[1];

[1] Weil, Geschicte der Chalifen, vol. III., p. 122.

palaces, mosques, hospitals, and observatories were built or maintained. But his greatest work was the establishment of a new system of education. Formerly the instruction under the Khalifate had been mainly ecclesiastical. After the boy quitted the schoolmaster, a personage ridiculous from his poverty and ignorance, and the butt of every satirist, he was taken to the mosque, where a higher class of teachers were supposed to instruct him. The teaching was, we may assume, pretty much what it has again became in Mohammedan countries. The master sat leaning against a column, and his pupils were indoctrinated orally with orthodox views on religion. They were taught the names, the periods, and, to some extent, the productions of the multitudinous poets, the traditions of the Prophet and his Companions, the deformed and contradictory annals of the Khalifate, and, perhaps, some legendary lore concerning the Pagan Arabs—their genealogies, their "days," or battles, their proverbs, and their extempore recitations. Niẓâm al Mulk superseded these institutions by colleges, built and endowed by the State, in which the instruction was of a higher order, though the chief object of the scholar was still to comprehend and to maintain the doctrines of the faith. One of these schools was celebrated for ages as the Niẓâmîyeh, at Bagdad; another was founded at Basra.

There was, therefore, nothing in the state of society in Ḥarîri's native city, to hinder the employment of such talents as he possessed. After the foundation of Bagdad, it had partially decayed, and Ḥarîri, in his last Assembly says, in exaggerated phrase, that there remains but a border of it. But it was still a rich and

populous, and, compared with many others in those troubled times, a secure place. Political revolutions, and the incursions of the wandering Arabs from the neighbourhood, sometimes harassed it; but the inhabitants, who considered themselves the most cultivated of the Arabs, were not debarred from their accustomed pursuits,—one of the chief of which was the indulgence of a kind of Athenian disputatiousness on all matters of literature and criticism. The grammatical school of Basra was, from early times, the most famous in the Arabic world. In its disputes with the rival school of Kufa, the verdict of succeeding philologers has generally proclaimed that it was in the right. The elaborate science of Arabic grammar was, indeed, founded within the walls of Basra, and was there developed into the most original and philosophical product of the mind of the race. In his last Assembly, Ḥarîri, celebrating the praises of his native city, says: "Of your number was he who originated grammar (or syntax[1]), and fixed it; and he who devised the measure of poetry, and invented it." The former of these was Abû 'l Aswad ad Du'li, who lived in the first century of the Hijra, was a partisan of 'Ali, and is said to have been present at the battle of Ṣiffîn. This person was, according to the biographer Ibn Khallikân, led to undertake the grammatical fixing of the language, by observing the errors and solecisms into which the new generation had fallen, through its intermixture with foreigners. Moreover, he was shocked at

[1] نحو is defined as the knowledge of the rules which teach the composition of discourse in the Arabic language, such as the إعراب or desinential syntax, the indeclinability, and the like. Ta'rîfât of Jorjâni.

the mistaken enunciation of the Koran, by those who were ignorant of the Arab desinences, and who consequently perverted its meaning. He applied himself, therefore, to study scientifically the idiom of Ḳoraysh, and reduced to a system the rules which the most eloquent of the Arabs had habitually and unconsciously observed. The other of these worthies was Al Khalîl ibn Aḥmed, the founder of the elaborate and artificial system of Arabic prosody. Al Khalîl was not only a grammarian, but a poet of eminence, an eloquent preacher, and well versed in what then was the only history, the genealogies and "Days" of the Arabs. Without doubt he was a man of powerful and original mind. Before him no one had thought of subjecting the versification of the old poets of the Ignorance to rules. Poetry had existed for generations before prosody, as we may conceive that Homer knew not the difference between a dactyl and a spondee. Khalîl discovered the relations between the various metres, and by a masterly analysis, fixed the primitive and secondary feet, dissected them into their constituent parts, and arranged the whole of the known metres into the five Circles which have ever since been taken as the basis of versification. The influence of these men, and others of similar intelligence and originality, gave the educated class of Basra an inclination to literary pursuits, which in course of time was largely mixed with pedantry. Nowhere were there so many commentators, rhetoricians, grammarians,—each seeking to surpass the other in subtlety of analysis; poets, poetasters, anagrammatists, enigmatists, and all the race of those who set learning above genius, and take difficulty of execution for merit. The Assemblies of Ḥarîri are,

themselves, the best picture of the society of the city. Wherever he may place the scene of the adventure, it is always Basra that he has in his mind, and the dilettanti of Basra whose taste he shares or reproves. Though the city had no longer the political importance which it possessed in the early days of Islam, when it was the chief focus of intrigue and revolution, it was yet, from its geographical position, a place of wealth and refinement. In the above-mentioned Assembly, the author lauds it as the spot where the ship and the camel meet, the sea fish and the lizard, the camel-leader and the sailor, the fisher and the tiller. In other words it was the port and emporium for all the lands of the Euphrates and Tigris, and its trade with the coasts of Arabia, with India, and even with Africa, enriched it in the worst of times. Ample provision seems to have been made for literary pursuits. Several libraries had been founded, and were open to the public. One of these, established in the previous century, is said to have been the first that had been placed in *wakf*, or mortmain, since Islam. Into these libraries the learned and the tasteful flocked, to read or to discuss the merits of this or that writer. Ḥarîri, in the second Assembly, gives us a picture of one of these meetings, in which the poorest conceits of a poet meet with high admiration. The habits and tastes of the Basrians had, therefore, doubtless, a great share in directing the genius of their townsman.

Ḥarîri was of good Arab blood. He is said to have descended from Rabî'at al Faras, the son of Niẓâr, the son of Ma'add, the son of 'Adnân, and to have boasted of this lofty ancestry. The sons of Rabî'ah inhabited Hijâz for some generations, paying tribute to the

sovereigns of Yemen. But in course of time they rose against their lords, and in their various tribes carried on a long and bloody war. At last they passed under the authority of the kings of Hira. At a later period Bekr and Taghlib, two of the chief branches of the race of Rabî'ah, quitted their homes in central Arabia, and migrated to Irak and Bahrayn. After Islam they settled in the country known still as Diyâr Rabî'ah. In some verses, addressed to Ḥarîri by an admiring young poet, he is described as a descendant of Khindaf, and the glory of the tribe of Temîm. The name of Khindaf, the wife of Alyas, son of Moḍar, is applied to all the descendants of Moḍar, through Alyas, and the mention of Temîm, who undoubtedly descended from Alyas, would seem to make some discrepancy in the author's pedigree. It seems, however, reasonable to conclude that Ḥarîri was a descendant of one of the races issuing from Rabî'ah, and that he represented the old Arab settlers in Irak. He was born, according to Ibn Khallikân, in the street of the Benû Ḥarâm, so called from a tribe of Arabs who had established themselves there. His name of Al Ḥarîri was derived, according to the same biographer, from his having traded in silk (*ḥarîr*). It is more probable that it was given him on account of his father being engaged in this commerce, for our author does not appear to have had at any time other than official and literary pursuits. He was possessed of a competence, and his family owned several thousand palm trees at Meshân, some distance to the north of Basra. He received a good education, according to the fashion of his age and city, and was well versed in grammar, receiving in this science the teaching of Al Faḍl al Kasbâni, one of the

most celebrated men of the time. The young Ḥarîri chose the profession which was then most in favour with those who combined literary tastes with political ambition. He became a Munshi, or official writer, and according to 'Imâd ad dîn, secretary to the Sultan Ṣalâḥ ad dîn (Saladin), whose book, the *Kharîdat al Ḳasr*, furnishes many particulars of his life, he was early employed in public duties, and had the official title of Ṣâḥib al Khabar. From this it would seem that his office was to inquire into and report upon the affairs of the province for the information of the central government. The high position to which official persons might rise, and the estimation in which they were held may be learnt from the author's twenty-second Assembly, in which he compares secretaries of correspondence with secretaries of finance; and after praising both highly, refrains from placing either above the other. Ḥarîri's official position not only gave him the acquaintance of the great, but also, probably, served him in the troubles of which Basra was for some time the scene. Several specimens of his correspondence have been preserved, and they display the qualities which are remarkable in the Assemblies,—great power over the language, and felicity of expression, but a fondness for far-fetched images, metaphorical phraseology, and those plays on words, which were looked upon as among the chief ornaments of style. He must, however, have devoted himself steadfastly to general literature, and have laid, at an early period, the foundation of the extensive and minute knowledge which is to be found in the Assemblies.

The great object of his literary life became to explore

and expound the niceties of the Arab language and history. His mind, though it united poetical with critical power, was narrow; his intellectual vision had little range. He spied out defects with the microscopic eye of an insect, but the merits which he prized were nice and contracted also. His chief works, after the Assemblies, are two treatises on Grammar, one called "The Beauties of the I'râb (or desinential syntax)," the other "The Pearl of the Diver." A portion of these has been published by De Sacy in his "Anthologie Grammaticale Arabe." The former is in verse of the metre called *rejez*, and is also *mezdûj*, or *methnawi;* that is, the second hemistich of each verse rhymes with the first. This metre was also adopted by Ibn Mâlik for his "Alfîyeh," the most complete and celebrated of the Arabic grammatical poems. Ḥarîri in this work comments on his own lines, and treats questions of syntax with extraordinary subtlety. But a still more characteristic work is "The Pearl of the Diver," in which the author points out the faults made by people of education in the use of words and phrases. The observation, judgment, and taste displayed in this book are remarkable, and the extract in the "Anthologie" will be frequently referred to in my notes. Every sentence is like a drop of grammatical gold; moreover the authority of the author is so high, that his dicta have never been disputed, and all subsequent writers have avoided the faults which he points out. But neither in these books, nor in the Assemblies themselves, is there any sign of original conceptions, or of the strength to break loose from the traditions of learning which the author had received. His works are in some respects the more valuable for

this, since he represents in its most exquisite and refined form the culture of his age. He was content to do best what others were also doing, and to gain the admiration of his countrymen by excellence in forms of composition with which they were well acquainted.

As I have not space for a full biography of Ḥarîri, I shall not dwell on those political troubles which unsettled the tenor of his life. He was already of middle age when the Crusaders marched through Asia Minor into Syria. Basra had suffered like the whole East from the convulsions of the Moslem world, but it was at least spared an incursion of the Christian Franks. Yet it is to the campaign of Baldwin in Syria that the composition of the Assemblies is possibly due. The hero of them is represented as an inhabitant of Serûj, a place in the neighbourhood of Edessa, and as having been driven into exile by the infidels who had destroyed the city and killed or despoiled all the Unifiers of God. But before I relate the anecdotes, which have been handed down concerning the origin of our author's great work, it will be well to describe what the Maḳâmah or *Assembly* really is, and how such a form of composition took its place in literature.

The first person who composed an *Assembly* is allowed to have been Abû 'l Faḍl Aḥmad ibn al Ḥasan al Hamadâni, commonly known as Badî' az Zemân, or "The Wonder of the Time." A short sketch of his life is given in a note to Ḥarîri's preface. It is only necessary to state here that he was one of those literary prodigies whom it was the fashion of his age and people to admire. The Arabs had long ceased to appreciate the fresh and pure spirit of true poetry. The simple grandeur of the poets

of the Ignorance no longer satisfied their tastes. They did, indeed, place these poets above any that had succeeded them, but it was principally as authorities on words, phrases, and grammar, that they valued them, since such ancient poets were held to have possessed the true and chaste language of the Arabs, which had been lost in succeeding ages by literary corruptions and by admixture with foreign peoples. But in their hearts the educated class in Irak and Syria preferred the conceits of Al Bohtori, Al Mutenebbi, and Abû 'l 'Ala, to the noble strains of Imr al Kays and Tarafeh. He was the most successful man of letters, the most likely to receive rich presents from princes and governors, and to be encircled by admiring listeners, who could show his wit by some far-fetched comparison, or his learning by the recitation of an enormous number of lines. Some men could repeat hundreds of kasîdehs or poems, others could quote verses descriptive of every part of the camel or horse, or in praise or dispraise of the multitudinous tribes. Others professed to tell the origin of all the innumerable proverbs and sayings which had been handed down, what hero of the Ignorance had uttered each, and on what occasion, and the issue of the adventure. A complete acquaintance with the Koran was, of course, highly honoured, and a felicity in applying passages of it in a new and surprising manner to the ordinary concerns of life was looked upon as legitimate wit. The traditions of the founder of Islam, his Companions, and immediate followers, formed a department of knowledge, without which the education of the polite was not complete. Alleged sayings of Mohammed, 'Âyeshah, Abû Bekr, 'Omar, 'Ali, 'Abd allah ibn 'Abbâs, and others, in-

creased in number yearly, and the learned in these things pretended to test their authenticity, to examine the testimony in favour of each, and even to decide on the very words and grammatical forms in which each had been uttered. Lexicography was studied with an intentness which probably no other people has devoted to its own language, and the consequence was a sort of literary consciousness in everything that was written, a looking to the form, rather than the substance, which gave an artificial and pedantic character to the productions of the time.

This tendency began soon after the establishment of the Khalifate. In the earlier periods of Islam, before divinity and grammar had been developed so much as to form a large part of the most learned man's stores, the prodigious memories of the Arabs were exercised on the productions of the poets, which, though individually short, formed, as a whole, a mass of literature of inconceivable magnitude. In the century preceding Mohammed almost every eminent Arab had been a declaimer of verse, and of these compositions many had merit, while all were thought worthy of being retained as the utterances of remarkable persons, and as monuments of a chaste diction which men feared was irrecoverably lost. Hence the راوي (râwi), or reciter, was in high favour, and his accomplishments were looked upon as almost equal in value to the genius of the poets whom he handed down. The Râwi was indeed the primitive type of the Arab man of learning, and it was to the impression which he made on the people that the tendency of the educated to the accumulation of vast stores of curious learning is for the most part to be attributed.

Writing was almost unknown among the Arabs of the Ignorance at the time when their poetical vigour was at its height. The story of the death of Ṭarafeh, the author of one of the Mo'allaḳât, the most highly prized of the early poems, shows that neither he nor his uncle Mutelemmis, also a poet, could read. It is doubtful whether Imr al Ḳays could read, though he is placed by unanimous consent at the head of all the early poets,—though the Prophet declared, in a complimentary malediction, that he would be the leader of the poets to hell, and though the Khalif 'Omar, speaking of poets, said, "Imr al Ḳays is he who has precedence of them; he has made the fountain of poetry to well forth to them." The general opinion is that Mohammed could not read, although the diction of the Koran was held even by the unbelieving Ḳoraysh to be the work of magic, and though a modern critic must allow that the author of the earlier and more impassioned Suras was a great lyric poet.

Much more, then, were the multitude unable to dispense with the services of the Râwi, who was their living library, their only means of communicating with the great spirits of their own time or of the past. The Râwi devoted his life to learning poetry by heart, and to informing himself of the lives of the poets and the incidents to which their compositions referred. Sometimes a Râwi attached himself to a single poet and travelled about reciting his verses and spreading his fame among the tribes. But after Islam, when a great monarchy took the place of the little autonomies of the desert, and the Court of Damascus supplanted the fair of 'Okâẓ; when also, in the opinion of many, the canon of pure Arabic poetry

was closed, the Râwi was transformed into the student of a capital, and often undertook to master the whole body of ancient literature. One of these marvels of memory was Abû 'l Ḳâsim Ḥammâd, who flourished about a century after the Hijra, and enjoyed the favour of the Khalifs Welîd ibn 'Abd el Melik and Hishâm. The house of Omayyeh has seldom a good word from Moslem writers, but it is impossible to doubt the services to literature of these great Khalifs, particularly in preserving the compositions of the past, which were in danger of being lost through the fall of so many of the reciters in the ceaseless wars. Much did indeed perish, and had it not been for men like Ḥammâd, and his patrons, we should now probably be without a single specimen of the pre-islamic poetry. Welîd asked Ḥammâd on one occasion how much poetry he knew: Ḥammâd replied that for each letter of the alphabet he could recite one hundred long poems rhyming with that letter, all composed by poets of the Ignorance. Welîd resolved to try whether or no this was an idle boast, and bade him begin his recitation. Ḥammâd began and went on until the Khalif was worn out with listening, and withdrew, leaving a trusty person to hear Ḥammâd to the last. At that sitting he recited two thousand nine hundred ḳaṣîdehs, being one hundred for every letter of the alphabet, all of which had been composed by poets who flourished before Mohammed.

It was not only by repeating great quantities of verse that the Râwi must seek for reputation: he was bound to remember apposite verses in every conceivable circumstance. Many of these feats are recorded, and, though we may doubt whether they were performed impromptu,

it is certain that the Râwi would on occasions deliver himself of an immense number of passages illustrative of a single idea. There is a composition extant in which a stranger is represented as knocking at a door, which is opened by a girl. The stranger demands hospitality, and the girl asks him the name of his tribe. He gives it, and the girl at once replies with some satirical verses from a poet on that tribe. The man abashed exclaims, "No, I spoke falsely," and mentions another tribe, on which the girl repeats satirical verses on that tribe also. The man then mentions another, and another, until the girl has satirized all the tribes of the Arabs by quotations from the poets. This composition is, of course, an exercitation by some Râwi, or some man of letters formed after the same type. The celebrated Asma'î, who sprung, like so many learned man, from Basra, but lived at Bagdad in the time of Harûn ar Reshîd, not only knew sixteen thousand pieces of verse in the metre called *rejez*, but performed astonishing feats of quotation, so that there was scarcely an object in nature that he could not illustrate by verses from the ancients. So profound was his learning that, when in old age he returned to Basra, the Khalif Al Ma'mûn used to draw up questions on doubtful points of literature and send them to him to be solved.

Al Hamadâni was a sage of this school, but he had in addition originality and wit approaching to genius. Like many of the most illustrious of the Arabic writers, he lived far from the Arabic peninsula, and may even have been of foreign origin. He was born at Hamadân, hence his name, but his life appears to have been passed and to have closed at Herat. He died in the 398th year of

the Hijra, A.D. 1008. Al Hamadâni was celebrated for his wonderful memory and for his powers of improvisation. He could repeat, says one biographer, a lengthy production which he had heard but once, compose poems impromptu, turn prose into verse or verse into prose with equal facility, he could make verses to any given rhymes and extemporize in any given metre. Had he done only this he would not have been superior to numbers of others, who were admired in their own circle but failed to attain a wide reputation. But Hamadâni devised a new form of composition eminently fitted to display the powers that he possessed. It was an advance to the dramatic style which had always been wanting to Arab literature. He imagined a witty, unscrupulous improviser, wandering from place to place and living on the presents which the display of his gifts produced from the generous and tasteful, and a kind of Râwi or narrator, who should be continually meeting with the other, should relate his adventures and repeat his excellent compositions. To these he gave the name of Maḳâmât, or "Assemblies," because the Improviser was always introduced as making his appearance in some company of strangers among whom the narrator happened to be, and as astonishing them by his rhetoric and poetry. To the narrator he gave the name of 'Isa ibn Hishâm, and to the Improviser that of Abû 'l Fatḥ al Iskenderi, and he is said to have produced four hundred compositions of this sort. They were of various lengths, some of them containing a long adventure or composition, others consisting of only a few lines. In some of them it appears that the two persons of the drama are not introduced, and the author speaks in his own character. It will be readily

understood that the rhetorician and the Râwi are only put forward to give liveliness to the composition, and that the object of the author is to display his eloquence, his poetical power, and his learning. The setting, if it may be called so, of the Maḳâmah is unimportant, the adventure related is often trivial, the diction is all in all. Both the personages strive to exhaust the beauties of the Arabic tongue, and the Improviser especially is made a master of eloquence. But it may be remarked here that Hamadâni is much less rhetorical than his imitator Ḥarîri; he has less artifice, if less genius, and in his Assemblies the story or adventure is more dwelt upon and less sacrificed to the display of style. The lapse of a century had spread the fame of Al Hamadâni through the Arabic world, and he had before Ḥarîri's time found imitators. The learned were pleased with a class of composition which lent itself so readily to the rhetorical diction they admired, and the people loved to listen to the mingled rhythmical prose and verse as they were half chanted by the reciter. Al Hamadâni was honoured with the title of Badî' az Zemân, "the Wonder of the Time," an appellation which almost supplanted his name.

The influence of Hamadâni could not but be powerful on the learned and refined Ḥarîri. The life of the latter had been passed in scholarship, but he was approaching his fiftieth year before he devoted himself to the work on which his fame rests. The origin of the Assemblies was, according to the general tradition, as follows. The armies of the Crusade had forced their way into Syria, and carried on a remorseless war against the Moslems. Baldwin, brother of Godfrey, took possession

of Edessa, which had been surrendered to him by the inhabitants, who were mostly of the Armenian race. According to an Eastern chronicler the following event took place in the year 494 (A.D. 1101). A Turkish chief named Sokman collected, in the neighbouring city of Serûj, a body of Turkomans and prepared to march against the Franks. The latter advanced to meet him, and the army of Sokman was put to flight. The Franks advanced against Serûj, laid siege to it, took it, and put to the sword the men capable of bearing arms. The women were made slaves, the place was plundered, and only those of the inhabitants escaped who sought safety in flight.

Some time after, Ḥarîri, being in the mosque of the Benû Ḥarâm, in the quarter of Basra where he lived, observed an old man enter in worn garments, and with all the marks of poverty. He had the wallet of a foot traveller, and had evidently come from afar. Abû'l Ḳâsim 'Abdallah, the son of Ḥarîri, who tells the story, says, "The company asked him whence he came; he answered, 'From Serûj:' asked concerning his *kinyeh* or byename, he answered that it was Abû Zayd." This wanderer had excited the curiosity of the company by the fluency and eloquence of his address, in which he had related the destruction of his city, the loss of his daughter, and his own exile and beggary. Ḥarîri went home and wrote what is now the forty-eighth Assembly, in which he describes this incident. In this Assembly, which bears the name of Ḥarâmîyeh, the usual order of narration is reversed; for Abû Zayd is his own Râwi, and Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, is introduced incidentally. Abû Zayd is made to say that he had long wished to

visit Basra, the city of learning and piety, of mosques and shrines, and that, at last, when fortune had brought him to it, he had made his way one evening to the mosque, where the people were engaged in a grammatical discussion on the حروف البدل, or interchangeable letters. He had entered to ask their bounty, not to learn their opinions on grammar; but, before he had time to test their liberality, the hour of prayer arrived, and the people began their devotions. When these were over, a man of noble mien and great eloquence stood forth and made a pious address to the worshippers, who asked the reason of his zeal, and were informed by him that he was a backslider, who had fallen from the practice of piety into debauchery, and had broken the vow which he had made never to drink wine. The stranger concluded by asking the faithful if they knew of any due atonement. The dialogue between the repentant sinner and the people is of course recited at length by Abû Zayd, who then relates that he had started forward and told the stranger that there was an effectual method of wiping away his guilt, and that was by bestowing alms on him, Abû Zayd, for that he had fallen from high estate to bitter poverty. In plaintive verse Abû Zayd described that he was of the dwellers in Serûj, a people of religion and right guidance; that there he had been wealthy and liberal, his mansion the gathering place of guests, and his substance freely given up to them; that like the Arabs of old he had kindled his fire on the height to attract the traveller, when the niggard let his fire burn low. This prosperity had now passed away, for God had brought the people of Rûm (so the Arabs call the Byzantines, whom Abû Zayd here confounds with the

Franks) on the land, and these had spoiled the home of every Unifier of God, that is, every Moslem. He, himself, had been driven forth to exile and poverty, while his daughter remained a captive in their hands, and he had not wherewith to ransom her. If, then, the stranger would pity and relieve him he would find pardon from God for the fault which he deplored. Abû Zayd then goes on to relate that the stranger had given him money and promised him more, and that Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, had complimented him on his eloquence and skill in opening men's purses. But, says Abû Zayd: I laughed exceedingly, and recited without hesitation :—

"Live by beguiling, for thou art in a world (or time) whose sons are as the lions of Bîsheh.

And turn on the stream of craft, so mayest thou make the mill of livelihood go round.

Hunt after the eagle, but if the chase fail, be content if thou but strike off a feather.

Seek to pluck the fruit, but if that escape thee, be satisfied with the leaves.

Ease thy heart from distracting care if fortune be adverse ;

For the changing of events gives notice to man of life's uncertainty."

Every subsequent Assembly composed by Ḥarîri is but a variation on this theme. His hero, Abû Zayd, is always the same ill-dressed, crafty old man, full of genius and learning, unscrupulous of the artifices which he uses to effect his purpose, reckless in spending in forbidden indulgences the money he has obtained by his wit or deceit, but with veins of true feeling in him, and ever yielding to unfeigned emotion when he remembers his devastated home and his captive child. There can be no doubt that Ḥarîri intends to represent

the groundwork of Abû Zayd's history as true, however much the vagabond improviser may romance on other matters. But it may be as well to mention here a supplement to the tradition concerning the origin of the character. The commentator, Ar Râzi, cited by De Sacy in his commentary to the forty-eighth Assembly, relates as follows: "I was told by the Imâm Al Ḥâfiẓ al Bendehi, who had it from Abû Bekr al Berathîni, who had it from Al Ḥarîri, that the Serûji was a fluent old man, full of eloquence and cleverness, who visited us in Basra, and, standing in the mosque of the Benû Ḥarâm, conversed with the people and asked alms of them. One or more of the magistrates was there, and the mosque was crowded with people of eminence, whom he pleased with the fluency and beauty of his language, describing how his daughter had been made captive by the men of Rûm, as is mentioned in the Assembly called Al Ḥarâmîyeh. "That evening," continued Ḥarîri, "there were assembled at my house some people of eminence and learning in the city, and I related to them what I had witnessed, describing the eloquence of this mendicant, and his art in effecting his purpose, upon which each one of them told how he had heard the same man discourse in a different mosque, and on a different subject, still more excellently; for he had changed his dress and figure in every mosque, and showed his wit by a variety of artifices. I was filled with wonder, and began that same night the composition of the Assembly Al Ḥarâmîyeh, imitating his style; and when it was finished I read it to a company of the chief people, who admired it exceedingly, and brought it to the knowledge of the Wazîr, Sheref ad Dîn

Anûshirwân ibn Khâlid. He pressed me to compose others like it, and I complied."

There is no reason to doubt the truth of this adventure. The talent for rhetorical and poetical improvisation which had always distinguished the Arabs, even in the most barbarous times, had been so much exercised by the literary fashions of the age, that it was no uncommon thing to find even an obscure and needy person who could pronounce a *khoṭbah* or moral address in rhymed prose, or could versify on a given theme. The Abû'l Fatḥ of Hamadâni, and the Abû Zayd of Harîri, were not imaginary types, and though we may well suppose that the themes of such strollers were often common-place, and their style unpolished, yet they served to give more gifted persons the idea of a new form of composition. It may even be that the Assemblies of Hamadâni had inspired, here and there, a poor man of letters with the ambition of playing the part of Abû'l Fatḥ, and that Abû Zayd was one of these. However this may be, it is certain that Ḥarîri's first essay in this kind of writing was received with unbounded applause. The tradition which makes Sheref ad Dîn Abû Naṣr Anûshirwân al Iṣfahani the patron of Ḥarîri is probably correct. He was a man of ability and taste, and became in later years Wazîr to the Khalif Mustarshid billah, and to the Sultan Mas'ûd. In his Preface Ḥarîri says that the composition of his Assemblies was at the dictation of one whose hint was a command, and to obey whom was a pleasure and advantage. This is generally supposed to refer to Anûshirwân, though Ibn Khallikân, in his life of the author, says, that being at Cairo, in the year 656, he had seen a copy of several

of the Assemblies written by the hand of Ḥarîri, and on the cover of them a declaration that he had composed them for the Wazîr Jelâl ad Dîn 'Amîd ad Dowlat ibn Ṣadaḳah, who was also Wazîr of Mustarshid. But this, which rests only on the doubtful genuineness of a handwriting, cannot outweigh the general tradition that is opposed to it, and Ibn Khallikân himself seems to feel this, for he adds, "God knows the truth." It is reasonable then to conclude that Anûshirwân, having read the first composed Assembly, and perceiving that Ḥarîri had rivalled in it his predecessor, Badî' az Zemân, urged the author to add others to it, and that Ḥarîri obeyed, with less unwillingness and modesty than he pretends. The tradition is, that he composed, from time to time, forty Assemblies, each of them, as we see, recounting an adventure of Abû Zayd, but without any connection with any other. His performances obtained for him the friendship of Anûshirwân, and he frequently visited Bagdad and payed his court to his patron. From a copy of verses preserved by 'Imâd ad Dîn, it would seem that the author was somewhat importunate in his devotion, for he complains not only of his separation from Anûshirwân, but also of the latter's neglect in not answering his letters. But such was the style of the poets of the time, who carried the besetting sins of servility and adulation further than any of their race before or since.

The friendship of Anûshirwân could not, however, prevent Ḥarîri from being endangered both in life and property by the calamities which came upon his city. Wars, predatory inroads of the neighbouring Arabs, political revolutions, followed by merciless executions of men in high position, disturbed many years of the author's

life. But his Assemblies were still given to the world from time to time. As soon as he had composed some ingenious exercise, he fitted it to an adventure of Abû Zayd, named it after some city of Islam, and repairing to the portico of the mosque, read it to the admiring crowd. The learned criticized; some in a friendly spirit, others with less good will, and Ḥarîri never hesitated to correct his work if he found in it an inelegant expression, a word used without authority, a solecism in grammar, a phrase of the Koran or a tradition misapplied, or a proverb wrongly quoted. On the other hand, he maintained his opinion when convinced that he was in the right, explaining his meaning, and refuting his adversaries in commentaries by his own hand, or in lectures to his pupils, whom he instructed in the full meaning of his compositions. His reputation soon surpassed that of the "Wonder of the Time" himself. Nothing so witty, so ingenious, and, what an Arab savant valued above all, so difficult, had ever been produced. Al Hamadâni's most esteemed compositions were tame when compared with the marvellous rhetoric of his successor. The Assemblies, handed about singly or in groups, made their way to all the cities of the East, and were destined, before the death of their author, to be perused from the Indus to the Guadalquivir.

Yet Ḥarîri was not without his literary mortifications. One of these affected him extremely. Having written no less than forty Assemblies, he collected them into a single volume, and repaired to Bagdad, to enjoy the triumph which ought to await the first man of letters of the time. But envy and misrepresentation had preceded him thither. His opponents were not content with

asserting that the work was full of faults, they also affected to believe that it was not his own. Al Hamadâni had been a real improviser, as has been mentioned; he could compose extempore in prose or verse, and in public, at the request of any bystander. But Ḥarîri was not an Abû'l Fatḥ, or an Abû Zayd. He was a slow and painstaking writer, and his exquisite compositions required time and solitude. A part of the public seems to have assumed the principle, that he who describes an improviser must himself be able to improvise, and finding that Ḥarîri did not possess this faculty, to have argued conversely that he was not the author of the Assemblies. When Ḥarîri came to Bagdad he found that his ability and his honesty were doubted. The adventure which followed is thus related by Ibn Khallikân. "Ḥarîri at first composed only forty Assemblies. Coming from Basra to Bagdad, he presented them as his work, but a number of the literary at Bagdad would not believe that he was the author, and said that the book was the work of a rhetorician of the Maghrib (Western Africa) who had died at Bagdad, and whose papers had fallen into Ḥarîri's hands. The Wazîr sent for Ḥarîri to the Dîwân, and asked him what was his profession; he replied that he was a *munshi* (an official writer and composer): the Wazîr then bade him compose a *risâleh* (a kind of ornate letter or address) on a subject which he named. Ḥarîri retired with ink and paper to a corner of the hall, and remained long, but God inspired him with nothing, and he rose up ashamed." On this occasion, one of the doubters, Abû'l Ḳâsim 'Ali ibn Aflaḥ, or, as others say, another poet among his opponents, made a satirical couplet on him:

"We have a Shaykh, descended from Rabî'at al Faras, who plucks the hairs from his beard in his perplexity:
May God send him an utterance at Meshân, as he has struck him with dumbness at court."

The point of this lies in the circumstance that Meshân was a place of exile for those who displeased the government at Bagdad, while it was also the site of Ḥarîri's estate, and the district in which he had discharged official duties. According to Ibn Khallikân it was very unhealthy. It appears, also, that Ḥarîri was accustomed to boast of his descent from Rabî'ah, and that when engaged in thought he plucked at his beard. "On his return to Basra he composed ten more Assemblies, and sent them to Bagdad, excusing himself for his former incapacity, by alleging his reverential fear in the Wazîr's presence." The number of the Assemblies was thus raised to fifty.

From Ḥarîri's preface, from various indications in the Assemblies themselves, and from traditions handed down by the commentators, we can perceive that the author had to meet other objections to his work. If not a plagiary, he was in the opinion of some an incorrect writer; in the opinion of others a person of doubtful piety. The critics spied out defects in his learning or diction; the rigid inveighed against the lightness of his narratives. Long after the Assemblies were completed, the author in his Preface speaks of their origin, and probably referring his present feeling to the epoch when he began to compose, says that he had sought to excuse himself with his patron from such a work, since he knew the envy and opposition that are excited by authorship. He says that he had reminded him of the proverb concern-

ing the man who puts together but two words, or indites merely a couplet of verses, namely, that if he succeeds he is exposed to envy, and if he fails he is brought into contempt. He anticipates any objections of plagiarism, by stating that in his whole book only four lines of poetry are taken from the writings of others, and that these are introduced avowedly as quotations. The rest, he says, is his own, whether it be good or bad. He speaks with a modesty which was, perhaps, hardly sincere, of the superiority of Al Hamadâni, inasmuch as the latter had originated what he, Ḥarîri, could only imitate. But his chief endeavour is to defend himself from the charge of frivolity, and of giving to the world idle compositions of a kind reproved by the Koran. The strict Moslems had always held works of fiction to be, if not blameable, at least unworthy to be written or perused by serious believers. The people had, indeed, always delighted in the narratives of the story-teller, and yet, with the inconsistency of the multitude, they were inclined to join with those who denounced them as disreputable. The Koran undoubtedly gave a sufficient pretext for bigotry. Mohammed's anger was often roused by the satires which were directed against him by poets, as well as by the histories and tales which Ḳoraysh preferred to his own revelation. The zeal of the reformer was, perhaps, largely mingled with the jealousy of the author. In later years, when he had become a powerful prince, he showed a more tolerant disposition; he listened to and praised the verses of Al Khansâ, lamented that he had never looked upon the warrior-poet 'Antarah, and even presided at a *mufákharah*, or poetical contest, as to superior worth and valour, between

the poets of his party and those of Temîm, an incident which led to the conversion of that tribe. But in the Koran and the Traditions there was enough to justify those who denounced such vanities. In the thirty-first Sura it is written, "There is one who will buy idle stories to make men wander from the way of God without knowledge, and who takes them for an amusement. To such a one is a debasing punishment. If our ordinances be recited to him he turns away proudly as though he heard them not, as though a weight were on his ears: announce to him a dolorous punishment." This passage had descended from on high as a denunciation of Naḍr ibn Al Ḥârith, who had bought books of the Persians, and told stories out of them to the Ḳoraysh (see Bayḍâwi *in loco*), and had said, "If Mohammed tells you of ʿÂd and Thamûd (the wicked tribes destroyed by God), I will tell you of Rustem and Isfendiar and the Chosroes." This same Naḍr had also incited the Jews to pose Mohammed with questions concerning the Seven Sleepers and Thu'l Ḳarnayn, and had brought on him a temporary humiliation, when the Prophet had undertaken to answer without having added "If it please God," and had been therefore left without inspiration, until after a time Gabriel descended and revealed the eighteenth Sura, called the "Cavern." Naḍr had been afterwards taken prisoner at the battle of Bedr and beheaded by the hand of ʿAli. As there could be no doubt in the mind of any believer concerning Naḍr's fate in the next world, his career was a terrible warning to future story-tellers, who should put the untrue on a level with the true. God had also denounced (Sura xxiii, v. 68-69) that idle "night-talking,"

in which his messages had been ridiculed, and to which Ḥarîri's Assemblies bore a suspicious resemblance.

The author did not escape annoyance on this subject. It is related that one Abû Ṭâhir, who afterwards commented the Assemblies, came to Basra, attracted by the reputation of Ḥarîri. He repaired to the mosque to see him, and as at that moment several learned men were there, each surrounded by his circle of listeners, he asked which was Ḥarîri. "There he is," said one, "spreading his follies among the people." Abû Ṭâhir, surprised to find so distinguished a man unpopular among his own people, retired without another word.

In the Preface, Ḥarîri takes pains to answer these objections. He says, that though the ignorant and prejudiced might detract from him on account of what he had published, and represent it as belonging to a class of writings prohibited by the law, yet whoever looked at the matter intelligently, and with a due regard to principles, would place the Assemblies in the list of useful writings, like the fables which introduce beasts, or inanimate objects, as discoursing. For the Assemblies, he argues, have like these a moral purpose; they are for instruction, not for display, and the fictitious story tends to the improvement of the listener. So that, if good or ill desert are to be measured by intentions, he is not only blameless, but may claim the merit of a moral and religious teacher. This defence was well adapted to satisfy reasonable theologians, since very few ventured to condemn the fable and the parable, a style of composition immemorial among Eastern nations, sanctioned by the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, and singularly pleasing to the popular taste. The fables of

Æsop had been known to the Arabs of a very early age, and been attributed to Loḳmân the Wise, a mythical personage whom some made contemporary with King David. The Sanscrit "Hitopadesa" had passed into Arabic literature through a Pehlvi translation under the name of "Kalîleh wa Dimneh," otherwise known as the Fables of Bidpai. It was one of the most esteemed works in the literature, for the translator 'Abd allah ibn al Moḳaffa', though a Persian by birth and a Magian during the greater part of his life, was so excellent a writer of Arabic that he even affected to surpass the style of the Koran, a piece of blasphemous vanity which shocked the public. 'Abd allah was horribly murdered by order of the Khalif Manṣûr, about the year 140, but "Kalîleh wa Dimneh" had been in Ḥarîri's time one of the most popular books in the language for more than three centuries. It may be observed that the Persian "Anwâri Sohayli" is another version of the same work. These stories and others of their kind had been generally looked upon as harmless and even profitable. The liberal minded might even quote the Koran ii. 24, "God is not ashamed to use a gnat or what is little larger, as a similitude."

We must not deny, however, that those inclined to strictness had some ground for their censures. Ḥarîri is not, indeed, an irreligious or, in any way, an immoral writer. In the whole of the Assemblies, there is not a phrase which can justify a suspicion of free-thinking. His mind and temper were not those of a sceptic, still less of one who would endanger fortune and position by questioning the prevalent theology. Indeed the habit of speculation was at this time on the wane in Irak.

The weakness of the Khalifate, and the troubles of the time, had made the learned shrink from anything which might bring them into disfavour, either with the local authority or with the multitude. The new ideas which, under the reign of Ar Reshîd and Al Ma'mûn, had penetrated into Islam, through Persian infidels and Syrian Christians, were now stifled, and Bagdad no longer represented the revolt of a civilized and intellectual society against the narrow formularies of the Koran. The Arab intellect was indeed busy, and some of its greatest masters of philosophy were yet to flourish. But this activity was chiefly in Spain, amid a community which had taken up the tradition of a higher culture, when it was passing away in the East. Though Andalusia had had its troubles, though Cordova had been sacked, the palace of the Khalifs overthrown, the remains of the library of Ḥâkim destroyed, yet, in the time of Ḥarîri, philosophical studies had regained their former sway. It was not so in Irak, and least of all in Basra, which was eminently the Moslem city, and devoted to a strictly orthodox culture. So far as we can judge from the Assemblies, Ḥarîri was utterly ignorant of Greek letters. He may, for what we know, have held the prevalent opinion that they were dangerous, and their patrons, like the Khalif Al Ma'mûn, hardly good Moslems. He was versed in the niceties of doctrine and discipline. The thirty-second Assembly, of which a sketch will be found further on, shows his knowledge of the Shâfi'î rite, to which he belonged, and at every turn the Koran and the Traditions are quoted. Furthermore, there is a real moral excellence in much that he writes. Many

of his discourses and his verses, though ill placed in the mouth of Abû Zayd, are without a blemish. But undoubtedly the spirit of the whole composition might well have offended the more scrupulous. Abû Zayd, with his dishonesty and dissoluteness, is made too attractive, and it is plain that in the mind of the author his genius more than compensates for all his faults. Ḥarîri depicts too favourably the witty and cynical improviser with his two wives—one old and weather-beaten, like himself; the other a handsome, impudent young jade, the ready instrument in her husband's knaveries. He has too much partiality for the beautiful and graceless son whom Abû Zayd is bringing up to his own wicked ways, for his descriptions altogether to escape censure. Then the appending of discourses, filled with the most lofty devotion, to the adventures of a profligate, the mingling of the sermon with the jest, of the psalm with the Bacchanalian song, will find objectors at all times. It may be argued in defence of the author that the style of composition had been fixed by his predecessor, Al Hamadâni, and that in so artificial a work the characters must not be judged by the laws of matter-of-fact morality. Abû Zayd and his family are but the setting of the pearls of poetry and rhetoric which the author lavishes on the world.

Some of the Assemblies, though very few of them, are not without a graver fault. Whatever be the age or country of a writer, he cannot but lose in reputation by indecency. Ḥarîri has but very little to answer for on this head: almost everything he has written may be read in any assemblage, and this comparative purity has done much to maintain his book as an in-

strument of education. Only one Assembly is founded on a trick absolutely indecent. In others there are here and there questionable phrases, which may be rendered by euphemisms, without danger to the sense. Whenever the author is led from the path of decorum, it is by his desire to show his wit in the management of *double-entente*. This figure, if I may call it so, was looked upon by the literary of the time as a sort of philological exercise; and Ḥarîri, however grave and sober might be his own character, addressed himself to it as he would to any other branch of scholarship. To produce a series of sentences which, to the duller listeners, should be common-place, but should excite a smile of admiration from the quick-witted, was an achievement which Ḥarîri had not the moderation to forego. He also mingled sacred things with something like ribaldry, in a manner that must have given deep offence to strict professors. In his description of his dead warrior, in the twentieth Assembly, he quotes the Koran; and in the forty-fifth, the ceremonies of the Pilgrimage—the most sacred act of Moslem worship—are treated with a licence still more audacious. But I must repeat that these faults are few and far between, that they hardly appear, except to the Arabic student, and detract little from the merit of Ḥarîri's work.

The composition and correction of the Assemblies occupied the last twenty years of the author's life. As has been mentioned, he died about the year 1122 of our era, at the age of 68. The arrangement of the work, as we now have it, is by himself, and to several of the Assemblies explanatory notes are added by his

own hand. As the adventures of Abû Zayd have little connection with each other, there is hardly a trace of order in the sequence of the compositions. The scene is shifted from one city of the Moslem world to another far remote from it, and the hero appears alone or with his family, in poverty or wealth, without any attempt to form a consistent history. The Ḥarâmîyeh, which was the first composed, is placed forty-eighth in order. Only the first and the last two have any special claim to the place they occupy. In the first, Ḥârith is represented as unacquainted with Abû Zayd. In the forty-ninth, Abû Zayd, being in the decline of life, urges his son to live by the noble and profitable art of begging, and in the fiftieth he is shown as a penitent, redeeming, by a religious life, the errors of his past ways, and parting from Ḥârith for ever. At the end of the Assemblies is a paragraph by the author, in the spirit of his apology in the preface. He says that the composition was a task beyond his strength, and undertaken unwillingly—alluding to the instances of his patron, Anûshirwân. He admits the little merit of his work, and affects to believe that it has had but small success. He asks pardon of God for whatever it contains that is frivolous and unedifying, and throws himself on the divine mercy. This literary modesty we may assume to be hardly sincere. Ḥarîri had really a very high opinion of his own powers, and Abû Zayd's boasts only represent the author's estimate of the compositions which he places in the mouth of his hero. Although in the preface he speaks reverentially of Al Hamadâni, we cannot but see that he believed himself to have surpassed his model. In the forty-

seventh Assembly Abû Zayd is made to say:—"If the Alexandrian (that is Al Hamadâni's hero Abû'l Fatḥ), did go before me, know that the light rain precedes the shower, yet the excellency is with the shower." Indeed the praises which Ḥarîri received were enough to exalt him in his own opinion, and to make him careless of unfriendly critics. Complimentary poems, and still more solid proofs of esteem reached him from his admirers. Mention has been made of the verses of Nejm ad Dowleh, celebrating Ḥarîri's merits, and lauding him as the glory of the tribe of Temîm. In the thirty-ninth Assembly, Ḥarîri had mentioned in terms of honour the Amîr Dobays, the Asadi, son of Sayf ad Dowleh Ṣadaḳah, the Arab prince of Ḥilleh, and in the commentary of Sherîshi it is related that Dobays was so delighted with the compliment that he sent him presents of the most costly kind.

More happy than this benefactor, who was put to death by the Seljûk Sultan Mas'ûd, or, according to another account, was driven out of the country, and joined the Christian crusaders in Syria, the author of the Assemblies ended his days in peace. He left three sons, who followed the profession of their father, and appear to have been men of ability and learning. One of them, 'Obayd allah, became chief Kadi of Basra; another, Abû'l Ḳâsim 'Abd allah, was an official at Bagdad; the third, Abû 'l 'Abbâs Moḥammed, succeeded his father in his post at Meshân. They had been well instructed by Ḥarîri in the Assemblies, in order that they might teach them after his death, and explain their difficulties to the numerous students. Of Abû'l 'Abbâs it is said that he was a learned and eloquent man, especially

versed in the Assemblies and ready with the best explanations. From these and other pupils the first commentators derived their materials. Among the contemporaries of the author, who admired and studied his work, the first place is due to Zamakhshari. He will be found frequently mentioned by the commentators, under this name or that of Jâr allah "the neighbour of God," which he received from having passed several years at Mecca. In learning he was not inferior to Ḥarîri, and he was especially one of the acutest grammarians of the age. But it is as a commentator on the Koran that he is chiefly famous. His great work, of which an excellent edition has been published at Calcutta, is the foundation of the more commonly used commentary of Bayḍâwi, who has borrowed from it largely. But as Zamakhshari was tainted with the doctrines of the Mu'tazilûn, his work has never been held as a sound guide, while Bayḍâwi represents the strictest Sunni orthodoxy. Zamakhshari read the Assemblies with admiration, and placed them on a level with the Mo'allaḳât. Two verses which he composed upon them have often been prefixed to the manuscript copies, and will be found on the title-page of De Sacy's edition:—

"I swear by God and his wonders, by the place of the pilgrimage and its rite,
Ḥarîri is worthy that his Assemblies should be written in letters of gold."

Such was the judgment of contemporaries: of his posthumous fame I shall have to speak in connection with his imitators and commentators.

Ibn Khallikân tells us that Ḥarîri was of mean aspect, and extremely ugly. A stranger who came to visit him,

and to study under him, did not sufficiently conceal his dislike of the master's appearance. Harîri addressed him in some verses, the purport of which was that,—

"I am a man to be heard of, not to be seen."

The reader will have already gathered that the Assembly is a kind of dramatic anecdote in the telling of which the author's object is to display his poetry, his eloquence; or his learning, and that with this view the subject is continually subordinated to the treatment of it, the substance to the form. But a full understanding of these compositions and of the two elements of which they consist, namely the rhymed prose and the verse, cannot be obtained without a consideration of the earlier Arabic literature. The origin of poetry among the Arabs, as among other peoples, is lost in obscurity; but there is a general consent that in primitive times there was no poetry save the verses which each man uttered as he had occasion. A singular aptitude for poetical expression, and an impulse towards it, distinguished both sexes from the earliest ages. The feelings of love or hate, of pride, defiance, ridicule, or pity, found utterance in verse, and this faculty of improvisation was, it would seem, cultivated assiduously even by the most barbarous tribes. The warrior defying his opponent in the field, the lover imploring his mistress, the herald in presence of a hostile band, would declaim a distich, or more; and these utterances, if they contained some striking thought or phrase, were handed down, and inseparably associated with his name. This was the origin of Arab poetry, and it is well to bear in mind its chief characteristic, for it is one which runs through the literature from first to last. From the earliest recorded versicles

down to the artificial pastiches produced at Cairo or Beyrout in the present day, the form of the Arab poem is that of an allocution. The dramatic and the epic elements are almost wanting. It is the poet who addresses his friend, or his patron, or the world, and makes known the feelings of his own soul, just as did the unlettered chieftain of pagan Arabia. His personality always pierces through the composition, as also does for the most part the personality of him who is addressed. The poet never effaces himself, he is always present, telling us what he thinks and feels, and bidding us notice that it is his panegyric, and his satire, and his moral observations that we are reading.

It is worth while to give some specimens of these traditionary versicles in order that the reader may view the earliest and least developed form, the palæozoic life, of Arabic poetry. For the purpose of illustration it does not matter whether the lines were actually spoken by the legendary personages to whom they are attributed: in some cases we know this to be impossible, in most it is very doubtful. But it is certain that the verses are of considerable antiquity, that they have come down from days when the regular poem, the kaṣîdeh, had not yet been developed, and that they do actually represent that kind of improvised poetical utterance to which each man had recourse on occasion.

Zarîfeh, the wife of ʿAmr ibn ʿÂmir Muzayḳîyah, had a dream which presaged the breaking of the dyke of Mareb, the event known in Arab tradition as the Sayl al ʿArim (see note to 17th Assembly). Horror-stricken she addressed her husband,—

"Nought have I seen, O king, like to-day:[1]
I have seen a cloud that banished sleep,
A cloud that lightened long,
That thundered and its bolt burst forth.
It set in flames all on which it fell,
Nor remained ought but it was o'erwhelmed."

To the questions of her husband Ẓarîfeh returns poetical answers of the same kind, and succeeds in persuading ʿAmr to quit the country. Of a similar character is the dialogue between Jathîmet al Abrash, king of Hira, and his sister Raḳâsh, when the latter hastily married ʿAdî ibn Naṣr, after the king's consent had been obtained during a fit of drunkenness,—

"Tell me, O Raḳâsh, and deceive me not,
Hast thou given thyself to a free man, or to a base born?
Or to one lower, for thou art fit for one lower?
Or to a slave, for thou art fit for a slave?"

Raḳâsh answered,—

"Thou gavest me in marriage, and I knew it not
Till the women came to adorn me.
This is from thy drinking the strong unmixed wine,
And thy continuing in thy folly."

The early legends are full of such lines, which, whether or not we admit their authenticity in each case, bear testimony to the habit of the Arabs to use such poetical discourse. Now there are two forms which the poetical diction of the race has taken for itself. The first of these is the rhymed prose, such as makes up the greater part of the Assemblies of Ḥarîri, the other is metrical verse such as Abû Zayd declaims here and there. It is worth while to consider the origin of these two dissimilar forms of poetical expression, and how it comes to pass that each

[1] Extract from Masʿûdi given by De Sacy in his "Mémoires sur l'histoire des Arabes avant Mahomet," Vols. 47 and 48 of "Mémoires de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et belles lettres."

should have so permanent a popularity, and be united with the other in the same composition.

It is impossible to become acquainted with Arabic literature without perceiving that there is a fundamental relationship between the poetry of the Hebrew and that of the desert tribes, whose intellect was first awakened fifteen hundred years later. On the resemblance, or we might rather say the identity, of the vocabulary of the two languages it is needless to speak. It is said that six-sevenths of the Hebrew roots are to be found in the Arabic Lexicon, and whole classes of the most familiar words, such for instance as the parts of the body, are the same in both languages. Such a radical identity of speech not only proves a community of race, but justifies us in believing that the intellectual tendencies and the forms in which they would arrange themselves would be similar. Both the Hebrew and the Arabic poetical literature were built up, we may assume, on the common foundation of the Semitic life, and they certainly amid all their diversity, bear traces of this primitive union. On this point it is interesting to compare the versicles which we find attributed to the early heroes and heroines of Arabia with those which are imbedded in the most ancient narratives of the Old Testament. Of these the one which comes to us as absolutely primeval, and which probably has a very high antiquity, is the address of Lamech to his two wives, which in our version runs as follows:—

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice,
Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech:
For I have slain a man to my wounding,
And a young man to my hurt.
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

The origin and meaning of this strange composition are lost to us. But to whomsoever it is to be attributed, it undoubtedly belongs to that kind of poetical utterance on occasion which existed among the early Arabs. It may be noticed here that the first four lines of Lamech's song have a species of rhyme in the uniform desinence of the affixed pronoun. The curse and blessing of Noah on his sons, though less poetical in form, may be considered as belonging to the same class. Compare also the answer of Jehovah to Rebekah when she inquires concerning the struggling of the children in her womb, and the blessings of Isaac upon Jacob and Esau. Compare also the blessings pronounced upon Israel by Balaam, the curse on Moab at Numbers xxi. 27, and the song of Israel at the digging of the well, verse 17. With the age in which these compositions were produced we are not concerned. It may be that some of them express the patriotic pride of Israel after the triumphant establishment of the tribes in Canaan, But neither the popular tradition nor the historical compilation would have attributed such a diction to patriarchal times unless the habit of poetical expression in important circumstances of life had been known among the people. In fact, the original type of Hebrew poetry is ever the ode, or song, inspired by some great event, and showing forth the joy or sorrow, the thankfulness or supplications, of the poet. Such are the songs of Moses in Exodus and Deuteronomy, the song of Deborah, the lamentation of David over Jonathan, and the Book of Psalms generally. Like the Arab poetry, they are the expression of individual feeling in which the personality of the bard is never lost, and it is reasonable to believe that the original type of them was a species of impro-

vised utterance common to both these branches of the Semitic race.

A further similarity is to be found in the form of Hebrew poetry. The reader of the English translation of the Bible can comprehend, as well as the scholar, the prevailing characteristic of a great part of its poetical language. This is what is called parallelism, which consists in making the second clause of a sentence answer to the first, either in the way of antithesis, or by the expression of the same idea in different words, or by the amplification of the idea. It is, as it were, a rhyme of the sense, and not of the sound. This peculiar structure of Hebrew poetry has rendered it especially fitted for translation, since it is independent of the tongue in which it is expressed, and can only be destroyed by gross want of taste in the interpreter. Whoever will content himself with a literal rendering of those sublime thoughts, may transfer the Bible to his own language essentially unharmed. The loose paraphraser may dissipate the spirit of the Psalms, or the Book of Job; nothing that is grand or beautiful can survive his incapacity; but the experience of ages has proved that the power of the Hebrew writers has been hardly diminished in the translations which have made them known to the Christian world. This parallelism is the chief though not the only formal rule of Hebrew poetry. Where it is absent we find its place supplied by strophic arrangements of the versicles, by refrains of words, by alliteration, and to some extent even by rhyme. But whatever rhythmical aids the Hebrew poetry may have adopted, we must hold as established that it was not subjected to the laws of what we call prosody. For centuries this has been doubted, and writers of succeeding

ages, both Jews and Christians, have sought to discover in the poetical books of the Bible certain rules of versification. The vain efforts of European scholars have been mainly incited by the declarations of Josephus. That so famous and so learned a writer should have erred, is not to be admitted without manifest proof, yet the barrenness of the labours of so many ingenious men seems to leave no doubt that the author of the Antiquities of the Jews misunderstood or misrepresented the genius of what had in his time already become an archaic language. Desirous, apparently, to give the Hebrew literature importance by showing that it was formed on models similar to those of Greece and Rome, Josephus speaks of the hexameter, pentameter, and trimeter measures that are to be found in the Bible. Of the song of Exodus xv. he says: *Καὶ Μωυσῆς ᾠδὴν εἰς τὸν θεὸν, ἐγκώμιόν τε καὶ τῆς εὐμενείας εὐχαριστίαν περιέχουσαν, ἐν ἑξαμέτρῳ τόνῳ συντίθησι.* *Jewish Antiquities*, *Book* II., *c.* 16. Similarly in *Book* IV., *c.* 8, he speaks of the second song of Moses in Deuteronomy as *ποίησις ἑξάμετρος.* In Book VII., c. 12, he says that David, having overcome his enemies, and given peace to the land, *ᾠδὰς εἰς τὸν θεὸν καὶ ὕμνους συνετάξατο μέτρου ποικίλου. Τοὺς μὲν γὰρ τριμέτρους, τοὺς δὲ πενταμέτρους ἐπόιησε.* It is fair to Josephus to suggest that he possibly meant that these ancient compositions were of a kind which in the classic languages would have taken the form of heroic, or elegiac, or lyric verse. But modern writers have not so understood him, and the notion that the Psalms and the Book of Job could be separated into spondees and iambuses, dactyls and anapæsts, has haunted Hebraists from the times of the early fathers down to our own day. Even so eminent an Orientalist as Sir William Jones has sought

to apply the Arabic prosody to the Book of Job. The malediction of the patriarch on his natal day at chapter iii., he divides into long and short syllables after a method of his own; but, when all is done, he entirely fails in proving to us that there is any metre at all. The more searching criticism of modern scholars has given sufficient negative proof that metre, as it exists in the classic languages and in Arabic, is not to be found in the sacred poets of the Bible.

Nor ought the Arabic scholar to wonder at its absence. Josephus and Jerome were prepossessed by the analogy of the classic languages; the scholars of modern Europe, who came to the study of Hebrew with tastes formed on classic canons, may have thought poetry without metre to be impossible, and hoped that the key which should unlock the secrets of Hebrew prosody would be yielded to persevering ingenuity. But the Arabic scholar is aware that the most ancient, the most popular, the most sublime, and powerful order of poetry in the Arabic language is as little metrical as Isaiah or Job. Among both races the original and primeval type of poetry is the old Semitic unmetrical accordance. Among both the simplest element of poetical speech, the primitive literary unit, is the *Versicle*, a short and serried sentence vigorously expressing a single idea, and detached from what goes before and comes after it. This, in its original form, as it exists in Hebrew and in a large department of Arabic poetry, is without metre. All poetry in both languages is made up by the agglutination of these versicles to one another; but the Arab type differs from the Hebrew in this, that whereas the Hebrew chiefly confines itself to parallelism, that is to a polarity or dualism between two versicles, the Arabic possesses

this dualism, combined with the principle of continuity. The dualism appears in the parallelistic speech, as it was uttered by the orators of the desert, and as it exists in the Assemblies of Ḥarîri. The continuity is more conspicuous in the semi-metrical verse, called *rejez*, while both are combined in those compositions of a stricter prosody which alone the Arabs dignify with the name of poetry.

When we examine the most ancient legends that have come down to us we find that they contain poetical utterances in the unmetrical form. Ẓarîfeh, of whom we have already spoken, prophesies the bursting of the dyke of Mareb in rhymed prose:—

"By the light and the dark; by the earth and the heaven;
Surely the trees shall perish; and the waters shall return as in the time of old."

In each of these lines the first and second parts rhyme in their last word, while the whole is unmetrical. In the ensuing dialogue the answers of Ẓarîfeh are in a similar strain and rhythm, and whoever may have been the author of them, they undoubtedly represent the oldest form of Arab poetical speech.

I would, therefore, place the rhymed prose of the Arabs as the analogue of the Hebrew poetry, and refer the origin of both to the primeval ages of the Semitic race. To utter one versicle, and attach to it another with an antithetic correspondence in sense or sound, formed the germ of all poetical composition. This parallelism, which among the Pagan Arabs was generally applied to a discourse in this style, perhaps existed before rhyme was introduced, for it is said that in ancient times the *khoṭbah*, or oratorical address, was not rhymed. But rhyme was at a later period universal,

and the rhymed prose to which the Arabs gave the name of سَجْع, from a fancied resemblance between its rhythm and the cooing of a dove, is the peculiar diction of the race. It may almost be said that there can be no narration or oratory of the highest order except in rhymed prose. It is beyond a doubt that it was cultivated among the tribes long before regular poetry was known, and was used almost in common conversation. Whenever the speaker wished to be emphatic and impressive he supplemented the proposition he uttered by another of similar tenor, which should rhyme with it in the last word. This will be sufficiently comprehended by whoever reads the present translation of the Assemblies. Women and even children learned to throw their thoughts into this rhythmical form, which gave an epigrammatic piquancy to their addresses or retorts. The rhymed diction of ordinary life was doubtless of the most simple kind, consisting of but two or three short sentences of similar desinence; but on greater occasions long orations in this style were uttered. The chief of a tribe addressing his followers, the herald claiming satisfaction or hurling defiance, the plaintiff before the judge, the rivals contending for superiority of pedigree or achievements spoke with rhyme. Eloquence was looked upon as tame and powerless without this symbol of elevated style. The history of rhymed prose is the history of the Arabic literature. It was the earliest, and has been the most enduring form of poetical eloquence. From the orators of the Ignorance it was adopted by the preachers of Islam, and the name خُطْبَة was applied to the weekly exhortations of the mosque, which are commonly in rhymed prose. Works of the

highest character have been written throughout with rhyme, among which I may mention, on account of its extraordinary merits, the History of Timur or Tamerlane by Ibn 'Arabshah. This composition, which approaches nearer to the epic poem than anything in the language, is one of the latest productions of the great ages of Arabian literature. Sir W. Jones bears witness to the genius of the author. "Equidem inter poemata heroica *Timuri historiam*, quam composuit scriptor admirabilis Ebn Arabshah, non vereor recensere: ita pulchris enim abundat imaginibus, ita jucundis narrationibus, et descriptionibus naturæ, morum, affectuum; ita magnificis illuminatur figuris, tam dulci numerorum varietate, tantâ elegantiarum copiâ conspergitur ut nihil cogitari possit accommodatius ad lectorem vel delectandum, vel docendum, vel etiam permovendum. (Poeseos Asiaticæ Comentarii.)"

In this work rhyme and assonance abound with a luxuriance that almost oppresses the reader, and the employment of such a style by an author of originality and genius, who had before him the greatest productions of his predecessors, shows how deeply rooted in the nature of the people was the sentiment for unmetrical cadence. In almost all Arabic works the Invocation and Preface with which the book begins are also in rhymed sentences: in the ordinary prose of the most sober narratives rhyme continually appears when the writer is describing anything which excites admiration or astonishment. So independent of a metrical prosody is poetry among the Arabs.

The reasons for the prevalence of rhyme, and for the undoubted fact that it has existed anterior to and in-

dependent of metre, may be found in the structure of the Arabic language, and the mathematical precision of its forms. If the root letters of a word be represented by white counters, and the ten augmentative letters—those contained in the words تنساه اليوم—be represented by coloured counters, every strictly Arabic word, whether primitive or derived, can be expressed to the mind so that we can say whether the counters mean that the action indicated by the root is past or present, is performed by male or female, or whether they signify him who does the action, or who suffers it, or who is of a capacity to do it, and so on of a multitude of notions related to the root. The derivative idea is always expressed by the same derivative form, and a form of one root is necessarily assonant to the same form of another. Here then is a connexion between the sound and the signification of words which would naturally suggest the use of rhyme: and we may conclude that it made its appearance not merely in obedience to a rhythmical impulse of the soul, but as representing a real connexion and responsion of ideas.

I have said that the Arab poetical speech not only makes use of parallelism as in the simplest form of rhymed prose, but also expresses itself in a sequence of corresponding versicles. These, whether metrical or not, have a continuous rhyme, and such a sequence of continuously rhymed periods is the germ of the Arabic poem. The unmetrical sequence is to be found in its highest perfection in the earlier and more poetical Suras of the Koran, when Mohammed, first touched with the prophetic afflatus, poured forth his warnings and denunciations among the Ḳoraysh. It is related of Mohammed

that he was ignorant of the laws of versification, as they were employed by the great poets of the century which preceded him; and that when by chance he quoted a verse he often destroyed the metre by changing the order of the words. Thus, when 'Abbâs, son of Merdâs, and of Khansâ, the poetess, dissatisfied with a division of spoil, addressed the Prophet in some verses, among which was the line:—

"My booty and the booty of my horse 'Obayd has been given to 'Onaynah and Al Aḳra'."

Mohammed quoting the line said, "Al Aḳra' and 'Onaynah," which destroyed the metre. Abû Bekr corrected him, and observed, "Truly has God said in the Koran, 'We have not taught him poetry and it suits him not,'" Koran, xxxvi. 69. But Mohammed had a poetic style of his own, which was consonant with the deepest feelings of his race. In his transports of zeal or devotion he uttered his unmetrical rhythms and awed even his most determined enemies. The shortest and simplest, but not the least powerful of these, are the Suras which are placed at the end of the Koran, and consist of but a few versicles, as the Ikhlâṣ, in which he *clears* or *quits* himself of believing in any but God; the Suras called Al Falaḳ and An Nâs, in which he invokes the divine assistance against calamity; and that in which he curses Abû Lahab and his wife. The most poetical Suras are somewhat longer, but present the same characteristics. According to tradition, the first revelation received by the Prophet was the 96th Sura, called Al 'Alaḳ. In this the rhyme is four times changed, the versicles of each paragraph being marked by a different desinence. The two first versicles have one desinence, the three

next another, the nine next a third, the four next a fourth, while the last, according to a caprice which is to be met with more than once, rhymes to no other.

One of the noblest compositions in the Koran is the 81st Sura, called At Tekwîr, descriptive of the day of judgment. It begins as follows :—

"When the sun shall be enwrapped;
When the stars shall shoot down;
When the mountains shall be moved;
When the brood camels shall be abandoned;
When the wild beasts shall troop together;
When the seas shall boil;
When the souls shall join the bodies;
When the maid buried alive shall be asked
For what crime she was slain;
When the leaves of the Book shall be opened;
When the heaven shall be drawn aside;
When the blaze of hell shall be kindled;
When the Garden shall be brought near,
The soul shall know its work."

These fourteen versicles have the same desinence; then the Prophet takes another, to which he gives four versicles; and lastly, a third, to which he gives eleven. This last paragraph is marked by the peculiarity that in the rhyme it makes no distinction between the letters Mîm and Nûn, owing, doubtless, to the close relation between their sounds. I might multiply examples, but shall content myself with drawing the student's attention to the 87th and 92nd Suras, which have a continuous rhyme throughout, one of nineteen and the other of twenty-one verses, and requesting him to compare them with the 20th Sura, in which the same rule is observed with longer and more prosaic sentences.

These rhymed but unmetrical utterances of Mohammed make a nearer approach to versification than the

ordinary rhymed prose, which consists of but two *karinetán*, or corresponding sentences, rhyming with each other, inasmuch as the former have the continuous rhyme, which is a chief characteristic of the regular poetry. But a still further advance is represented by the semi-metrical *rejez*. This is the oldest and simplest form of versification known among the Arabs, and vast numbers of lines belonging to it were handed down from the pre-Islamic period. It was the favourite vehicle for the poetical or sententious utterances of chiefs and warriors, sages and diviners. When poetry was more seriously cultivated, its composers aspired to a more harmonious and dignified measure, and placed themselves under the restrictions of a more elaborate prosody; but the early declaimers, who improvised in obedience to the feelings of the moment, and were probably unconscious that they were uttering poetry at all, contented themselves with the rude measure which reminded the hearer of the weak and trembling trot of the sickly she-camel. The *rejez* in its normal form consists of a foot, — — ⏑ —, twice or three times repeated, but as each of the first three syllables may be made long or short, the structure is simple to baldness, and the tone undignified. Khalîl ibn Ahmed, though he gave the *rejez* a place in his Circles, would not admit that lines composed in it were شعر or poetry, since they wanted the peculiar property of the Arabic بيت or verse, which consists invariably of two hemistiches. Yet the *rejez*, though superseded in ambitious compositions by more perfect metres, has never been neglected by the literary. It has always received a kind of respect as a primitive form of versification, descended from the heroic ages,

and still adapted to short and pithy compositions. Ḥarîri makes much use of it in his work, and for excellent specimens of it the student may be referred to the Third and Fifth Assemblies. The Arabic prosodists seem to have detected the relationship of the *rejez* to rhymed prose, for Al Akhfash held that the two-footed *rejez* was only prose. The first who composed a regular poem, or ḳaṣideh, in *rejez*, is said to have been Al Aghlab al 'Ajili, in the time of Mohammed. After him came Al 'Ajâj; but I believe that no long poem of conspicuous merit has been written in this measure. The grammatical treatise, called the Alfîyeh, by Ibn Mâlik, which is often cited in the notes to this translation, is in *rejez muzdawij;* that is, the second hemistich of each verse rhymes with the first, and each rhyme is limited to a single verse. So also are the "Beauties of Syntax," by Ḥarîri.

Verse, or poetry proper, was a development of *rejez*. As poetical culture was extended, the Arabs felt the want of more harmonious and stately measures, and gradually formed for themselves a more varied and yet a more severe versification. Throughout the Arab prosody we may, however, trace the primitive and rudimentary *rejez* in the iambic and anapæstic character of the lines. The taste and scholarship of Ḥarîri have enabled him to diversify his work by introducing most the metres which were in use in his time; but among the older poets only four or five of these were commonly employed. In the celebrated collection of Arab verses, called the Ḥamâseh of Abû Temmâm, more than five hundred of the pieces are in the metre *ṭawîl;* the *kâmil*, *wâfir*, and *basiṭ* follow at a great distance, each having less than a hundred, while the others are but sparingly used. Of the seven

Mo'allaḳât, as generally given, those of Imr al Ḳays, Ṭarafeh, and Zohayr ibn Abi Sulmè are of the metre *ṭawîl*, those of Lebîd and 'Antarah are *kâmil*, that of 'Amr ibn Kulthûm is *wâfir*, and that of Ḥârith ibn Ḥillizeh is *khafîf*. The favourite metre of the early poets, the *ṭawîl*, is remarkable for its grave and sonorous character—it may be called the heroic measure of the Arabs. In some verses, addressed by Abû 'l 'Ala to a man of letters, the poet, excusing his own deficiencies, says, by way of illustration, "Do you not know that the metre which is the most complete of metres, is sometimes modified by a weak letter." This epithet of "complete" is explained to refer to the *ṭawîl*, because a verse of this metre may consist of forty-eight letters, while in the *medîd* and *basîṭ* the longest verse can only contain forty-two. This property from which it takes its name, and also the prevalence of long syllables, made it especially suitable to the loftier class of poetry, whether descriptive or elegiac. The *kâmil* is in its structure the most closely related to the *rejez*. Indeed, a *kâmil* line may become pure *rejez* by the employment of permissible licences, though if the peculiarity of the *kâmil*, the use of two short syllables at the beginning of the foot appear even once, the poem is considered to be in *kâmil*, and not in *rejez*. It would, therefore, seem that *kâmil* and the closely related metre *wâfir* represent the first developments of the *rejez*, and mark the transition to a more elaborate versification.

Ḥarîri, one of whose aims was to exhibit the classic metres, uses for the most part those for which there is high authority; but, long before his time, the poets of Islam had added to the number which had been known during the Ignorance. Although the metres of the old

time were looked upon as the best and noblest, and justly so, since they sprang from the original poetical life of the people, yet the craving for variety, and, perhaps, the intercourse with other nations, led poets to seek new forms of versification. ((One of the first who did this was the celebrated Ḥabîb ibn 'Ows, commonly known as Abû Temmâm. He was born about the year 190 (A.D. 805), near Damascus, and is placed with his countryman Mutenebbi in the first rank of the later poets. His profound knowledge of the Arabic literature is proved by the collection of poetical pieces, called the *Ḥamâseh*, which he made, and which is only one of three similar compilations; the other two being the *Foḥûl ash Shu'arâ* (the Heroes of the Poets), and the *Ikhtiyârât*, or Selections. He is said to have known by heart fourteen thousand pieces of the metre *rejez*, besides *Ḳaṣidehs*, and fragments. Nor were his own compositions few. His poems in all the various classes of eulogy, satire, elegy, and the rest, are said to number 484, and to contain 7707 verses. Two or three new metres are ascribed to him, and as he had an unbounded popularity in his own age, it is probable that the poets who imitated him considered his authority for their use as equal to that of the ancients. But the best writers restricted themselves generally to the sixteen metres described by Khalîl ibn Aḥmed, the systematizer of the national prosody; and even of these some have always been but little used. The Persians, who adopted the Arabic versification, have formed for themselves other metres, such as *ḳarîb*, *jedîd*, and *mushâkil*, and have invented circles to explain the metamorphoses of the *Ruba'i*, or quatrain, which they orignated. But in Ḥarîri, the forms of the original Arabic poetry will be

found almost unperverted. His work resumes all that was most classical and of the highest authority in the writings of his predecessors, and no better aid to the study of the laws of Khalîl can be found than the diverse improvisations of Abû Zayd.

It will thus be seen that in the Assemblies the highest literary forms of the language are united. Abû Zayd's harangues and sermons are those of the pagan orator or the Moslem preacher; Ḥârith's descriptions are in the rhetorical style which the most accomplished writers imitated from them; the diversified poetry of the Arabs, from the simple *reǰez* to the most ornate diction of the ḳaṣîdeh, is represented in Abû Zayd's verses, and we have a compendium of all that had established itself in popular favour during many centuries. European readers will perhaps wonder that the author, who was master of such resources, should have restricted himself to two or three characters, and to such a monotony of adventure. He has evidently fancy and originality: how is it then that, having advanced so far to the dramatic form, he should not have been led to improve on his type, to place Abû Zayd in more varied circumstances, and surround him with more interesting people? We have all through the same adventurer, making gain by tricks which resemble each other; we have always the circle of dilettanti, or the Kadi generous, or foolish, or stingy, as the case may be. Yet the author, whatever may be his apprehensions of other demerits, never excuses himself for his repetitions. One explanation of this is that the adventure is always treated as subordinate to the poetical or rhetorical display, that the audience did not care how Abû Zayd was brought on the stage so long as he discoursed with

sentiment and wit. But it must also be observed that this uniformity of type is one of the characteristics of Arabic literature. The East has never been studious of novelty, and if a thing was good, an audience would not weary of it any more than of the striped mantle, or the turban which had been worn from time immemorial. We modern followers of fashion, who cannot read the same authors, follow the same amusements, or wear the same shaped clothes two years together, have an impatience of monotony unknown even to our own European race in former ages. The comedy of the ancients had but a limited range of character and incident. The two old men, and the "cultus adulter, stultus vir, callida nupta" were reproduced in a manner which in modern times would weary the most indulgent audience. The popular Italian comedy with its harlequin and scaramouch carried sameness to the extreme. The people in its unsophisticated state loves to recur to familiar types, as a child will sooner hear Jack the Giant Killer, or Tom Thumb, for the tenth time than be told a new story. This clinging to established forms is especially remarkable among the people of the Semitic race. Successive generations of writers are content to produce variations upon a single theme. To fear the reproach of imitation never enters the mind of those to whom the prevalent usage has almost the sanctity of a law. They follow the manner, and even repeat the phrases of compositions consecrated by antiquity, or popular esteem; for their countrymen, far from desiring originality of style, would probably resent it. So we find some of the later Hebrew Psalms to be almost a repetition of those of an earlier age, and as if pieced together from their fragments. The

diction of prophecy is fixed by Joel, or by some predecessor whose compositions have not reached us, and through five centuries the strain of promise and malediction never varies. The spirit, the style, the images, the rhetoric, are everywhere identical. We can see that each prophet is inspired, not only by his own fervent genius, but by the utterances of those who have gone before, and that he adopts instinctively and, it may be, unconsciously, the traditional sacred language of his order. We have even direct imitations of particular passages, as, for instance, the prophecy against Moab at Jeremiah xlviii., which is plainly taken from Isaiah xv. and xvi.; also the curse of Jeremiah on his birth at xx. 14, which is identical with the opening verses of the third chapter of Job.

In Arabic literature the same character is manifest. The poet never hesitates to fashion his composition after a prevailing type, and to repeat this continually without any striving for originality. To mould his production on any other than the traditional form would be to expose himself to the charge of bad taste, and what was worse, of want of learning. The ḳaṣîdeh, the finished poem of the Arabs, was subjected to arbitrary laws, which, though perfectly needless, were observed by numberless writers as if sacred and inviolable. The first ḳaṣîdeh is attributed to Mohalhil Ibn Rabî'ah, who composed it on his brother Kolayb Wâ'il, one of the most celebrated persons of antiquity; but the poet who impressed on the ḳaṣîdeh the type which it retained for ages was the celebrated Imr al Ḳays, the son of Mohalhil's sister Fâṭimeh. The judgment of Mohammed and 'Omar upon this prince of Arab bards has been already mentioned. The Khalif 'Ali, a man of taste and cul-

ture, was also full of admiration for the great poet of the Ignorance. These three founders of Islam only followed the opinion of the most illustrious people of their age, and transmitted it to posterity. Imr al Ḳays had introduced, or first made popular, a certain opening of the ḳaṣîdeh, which consisted of an address of the poet to two friends, who were supposed to have halted with him at a spot where at some past time the tribe of the poet's mistress had dwelt. The poet points out the traces of the encampment, the ashes of the extinguished fires, the deserted pen of the camels, entertains them with the story of his loves, and then passes, by an abrupt transition, to the proper subject of his poem. This capricious overture caught the fancy of contemporary poets, and to introduce a subject by the two boon companions, the mistress, and the deserted encampment, became a favourite device. Each of the seven Mo'allaḳât opens in this manner, and what was originally only the caprice of a single poet became an almost inviolable law. Even Ḥârith, son of Ḥillizeh, who was a hundred years old when he improvised his Mo'allaḳah before 'Amr ibn Ḥind, and so leprous that he stood behind a veil till the king, delighted with his poetry, bade him come forth and sit by his side, laments his separation from an imaginary beauty. Succeeding poets followed the same fashion. Whatever the occasion of the *ḳaṣîdeh*, the writer introduced his mistress, praising her beauty, and lamenting her absence, before he turned to his subject, which was generally the eulogy of some great man. Mutenebbi's mistress figures in some of his poems, but he is said to have been the first to have discontinued this *nasîb*, or mention of the beloved one, and to have begun with the

eulogy of the patron. Such a poem was, however, not judged to be complete according to poetical laws, and was described by the words بتر and اقتضاب, as if docked or truncated. It is needless to dwell upon the general uniformity of the Arab ḳaṣîdehs in other respects. The poet praises himself, his race, his camel, his horse, his martial exploits, his sword and spear, and, in later times, the prince whose favour he desires to win. For centuries every composition of this class was constructed on the same type, and limited to the same narrow range of ideas. The poet's merits were judged by the skill with which he reproduced and varied the thoughts of antiquity. We need not wonder, then, that Ḥarîri neglected to change the character of the Assemblies as received by him from Hamadâni. Not only did the traditional improviser and *râwi* suffice for his contemporaries, but even succeeding imitators have never thought it necessary to add to the persons of the drama. The Assemblies of Naṣîf al Yazaji, composed within the last few years, are as rigidly simple in their structure as the productions of eight hundred years ago.[1]

It now remains for me to speak of those qualities of Ḥarîri's work which give it so great a linguistic value, and have made it, wherever the Arabic language

[1] An analogous instance of permanence of a fashion in composition is to be found in the Persian ghazal, which, by a law as capricious as that I have mentioned, must contain the poet's name in its closing lines, as a sort of signature. The poet Ka'b ibn Zohayr began his ḳaṣideh in honour of Mohammed with the words "Su'âd has departed," and such was the influence of poetical fashion that, according to Suyûti, the Arabs in after times had no less than 900 poems beginning with "Su'âd has departed." Su'âd thus became the name generally used to signify a cruel and capricious mistress. (See French note at Vol. II. p. 195, of De Sacy's Ḥarîri).

is studied, the text-book of those who would obtain a profound and scientific knowledge. It is not too much to say that whoever has read the Assemblies and their commentators, will have formed a notion of every department of purely Arabic and Moslem culture. Grammar, lexicography, rhetoric, poetry, history, antiquities, biography, popular customs and sayings, theology, religious traditions, civil and ecclesiastical law,—all enter into the work; which is, as it were, a compendium of "leading cases," in all sorts of studies. The student is placed on the track of almost every kind of learning, and if he follows the indications of the author, and seeks, with the help of the commentators, to explain his allusions, penetrate his intentional obscurities, overcome his cunningly-devised difficulties, verify his endless quotations, and keep in memory the multifarious information on language and grammar, he will have been initiated into all the learning of the author's age, and in his subsequent studies will have only to build on a foundation which has been solidly and securely laid.

The first peculiarity of the Assemblies is the use of words which are rare but ancient, classical, and remarkable in the eyes of the learned, from their having been found in some esteemed composition, and become the subject of doubt or contention. In the time of the author the language was much corrupted among the people, by long intermixture with foreign races. The Arabs had always held the belief that seclusion from the rest of mankind was necessary to preserve the purity of their language. The undefiled speech of the race was only to be found among those tribes of Ḥijâz or Nejd

which had lived remote from Persian or Greek influence, and developed the Semitic tongue into the matchless idiom of the Mo'allaḳât and the Koran. Ibn Khaldûn, an acute and reflecting writer, and in critical power above most of his countrymen, speaks in a well-known passage of the corruption of the Arab language. He says that the descendants of Moḍar, who used the classical language, lost the faculty of speaking it in purity by dwelling among people of other races, since they borrowed of them forms and words. And for this reason, he continues, the speech of Ḳoraysh was the most eloquent and pure, since they were most remote from the abodes of foreigners. Next in excellence was the speech of Thaḳîf and Hothayl and Khozâ'ah, and the Benû Kinâneh and Ghaṭafân and the Benû Asad, and the Benû Temîm. But as for the tribes more remote from Ḳoraysh—as Rabî'ah, and Lakham, and Jothâm, and Ghassân, and Iyyâd, and Ḳoḍâ'ah, and the Arabs of Yemen, their speech was imperfect, through their mixture with the Persians and the Abyssinians; and thus, in the opinion of Arabic linguists, the greater or less distance of a tribe from Ḳoraysh was the measure of its deflection from the pure language of Moḍar. It may be noticed here that this opinion concerning the conservation of the language in the heart of the peninsula has acquired an irresistible argument from the travels of Mr. Palgrave, who has satisfied scholars that the language of the Koran, with all its inflections and syntax, is still the dialect of the secluded Nejd. But in the days of Ḥarîri, and in the city of Basra, the chaste speech of the Arabs was the possession of only a few. The unlettered Bedouin, who came with camels or horses from the

desert was, for the use of words and their precise pronunciation, a greater authority than the most learned grammarian. For the corruption that had set in immediately after the first conquests of Islam, had so transformed the speech of Irak and Syria, that the classic language, in its refinement, was obsolescent, and had become the artificial study of the lecture-room and the mosque. Even so early as the close of the first century of the Hijra, the great Khalif, Welîd ibn 'Abd el Melik, spoke so corrupt a dialect that he could not make himself understood by the Arabs of the desert.[1] Great scholars like Sîbawayh and Zamakhshari, are said to have possessed in perfection the idiom of Moḍar, though not even of Arab blood, but Ibn Khaldûn relates that they had acquired this by mingling from infancy with men of the tribes who spoke a chaste language. To the great number, even of the educated, the speech of Ḳoraysh and of the great poets was almost a dead language, not only as regarded its desinences and constructions, but even as to the use of individual words. Now this ancient speech, which every day became less understood of the people, was the principal study of the learned. Grammatical researches began in the first century of Islam, through the necessity of explaining doubtful passages of the Koran. It was then that the diacritical points were added to certain letters, the Arabs having originally, in the little that they wrote, expressed more than one sound by the same character,—a practice which filled the sacred text with ambiguity. The tyrant Ḥajjâj ibn Yûsuf was, according to Ibn Khallikân, the first who attempted to remedy this defect, but his system differed

[1] Lane. Preface to Lexicon, p. viii.

from that which was afterwards introduced by Abû 'l Aswad. As the vocabulary of the language increased, through a sort of fusion of the dialects of the tribes, which took place in the non-Arabian provinces; as various forms of the same word, of greater or less authority, came to be indiscriminately used; and as the multitude borrowed from the Persian, the Syriac, or the Greek, so much more did the learned think it incumbent upon them to separate the chaste idiom from the corrupt, to show what was Arab and what was A'jamî or foreign; to determine the most genuine form of any word that was spelt or pronounced in more than one manner, to declare whether س or ص, ظ or ض, ع or غ, ح or ه was correct, to decide on the presence or absence of *hamzeh*, and to fulfil for the people the functions of an Academy of Letters.

Theirs was no easy task. The European, who launches out into the vast ocean of the Arabic language, knows how long and weary is the voyage, and yet he has to guide him the grammatical luminaries of a thousand years. The doctor of Basra or Kufa did, indeed, speak the language which he commented, but this very familiarity in some respects increased his difficulties. He dwelt amid a Babel of conflicting forms and vocables, and had to decide—from a Koran of imperfect orthography, from poems which, for the most part, were only orally transmitted, or from the diverse utterances of various tribes—what was the pure Arabic form of this or that noun or verb. It is impossible for one who has not perused the writings of these acute and indefatigable scholars to imagine the labour they expended in the determination of the classic tongue. For the proper form and signifi-

cation of a word they looked primarily to the Koran as the absolutely perfect standard of speech, and then to the productions of the early poets. In this they had the sanction of the Prophet himself, who, according to a tradition, had said, that when a man was in doubt as to the language of God's word, he would do well to take the poets to counsel. Poetry was especially fitted to fix the form of a word, since the sácnsion of a line would depend on the vowelling and on the inflection of the words of which it was composed, and thus insure an approximation to exactness. The *shawâhid*, or proofs of lexicography and grammar, were therefore chiefly verses of the poets, and these are to be found imbedded in endless numbers in all commentaries and grammatical treatises. But only the earlier poets were of high authority. Within a century of Mohammed's flight from Mecca, the Moslem empire stretched from Kashgar and Moultan to Morocco and the Pyrenees, and the Arab man of letters was exposed to the corrupting propinquity of men of many different races. Only a poet of the Ignorance, that is, one who had died before the preaching of Islam; or a *Mukhaḍram*, that is, one who was contemporary with it, was looked upon as of paramount and unquestionable authority. An Islâmi, that is one who was born after the rise of Islam, was of less consideration, and after the first century, the poets are called Muwelledûn, and are only quoted for their literary beauties, and not as authorities for the Arab tongue.

It was among the designs of Ḥarîri to exhibit in their right form, or signification, a number of these words about which there was, or had been, doubt. With this view he introduces them into verses in such places that the metre

determines their structure, or the rhyme their orthography. Where two similar forms may both be correctly used, he contrives to bring them together, and to make it evident from the sense that they have the same meaning. Where two words are derivatives from the same root, but differ in form, or where they are identical in orthography, but are derived from different roots, or where they have the same letters, but a different vowelling, the juxtaposition serves also to awaken the reader to a nice discrimination between them. It must not, however, be supposed from this that Ḥarîri's intention was strictly to write a philological treatise. That is a notion which has prevailed among some critics, who would make the Assemblies merely an ingenious and pedantic puzzle, but no real Arabic scholar will hold such an opinion. The Assemblies were written, primarily, to amuse and entertain, and they were listened to with pleasure by numbers who cared nothing for their hidden learning. But the author, having been accustomed to philological discussions all his life, and having audiences equally zealous, was led naturally and almost unconsciously to insinuate into his work the subtleties which were uppermost in his mind.

In the same way the use of rare expressions, which forms one of the chief difficulties of the work, may be conceived to be more spontaneous than it at first sight appears. The doubtful words and phrases of the early time, and particularly those derived from the Koran, had been often the subjects of debate for generations, and the author might well be tempted to rouse the attention of his audience by throwing among them one of these apples of discord. In a translation the learned vocabulary of Ḥarîri is lost, and yet it will be perceived that his com-

positions do not lack vigour or pathos. May we not then acquit him of having merely digested an antiquarian glossary into a dramatic form.

The Assemblies, indeed, are far from restricted to antique words and phrases; on the contrary, they are in some respects extremely unclassical, inasmuch as the author delights to introduce the provincial expressions, and to refer to the manners of Irak. There is a singular mixture of old and new in the work; strange and obsolete words, rough with gutturals, such as are met with in the proverbs of Maydâni, or in the earliest poets, stand side by side with others that have been borrowed from the Persians and the Greeks. There is more of this foreign element than the purist quite approves. Words of exotic origin are indeed to be found even in the Koran, as سجّيل, استبرق, قراطيس, قسطاس; but strict Moslems have made excuses for them, even to the point of denying their foreign extraction, and of asserting that they are common to Arabic and to other languages. Their dictum was plausible, since undoubtedly they could show that those words and many others had existed in Arabic speech before the advent of Islam; nor can it fairly be denied that terms which were in use among the Arabic-speaking Jews, such as توريّة, جهنّم, تابوت, سكينه, might be fairly taken to be Arabic. But Ḥarîri's employment of non-Arabic words is capricious and sometimes excessive: they are introduced unnecessarily, as if his purpose were to give liveliness to his composition, and to suit himself to a popular whim. The Andalusian Sherîshi is obliged to confess his ignorance of some of them, and as we are told that even in the author's own time and city he was accused of

incorrect expression, we may assume that some of the learned in Irak objected to his too liberal vocabulary.

The use of rare phrases, the origin and meaning of which were doubtful, is of constant occurrence in this work. The explanation of these, according to the best lights I have been able to obtain, makes up a large part of the notes which are appended to this translation. Some of them are interpreted by the author himself, in short commentaries which he has added to some of the Assemblies, others are left unnoticed; but Ḥarîri lectured on them to his sons and pupils, and his judgments are recorded by the commentators. An immense number of sayings, proverbs, and idiomatic phrases were current, all supposed to have originated with the eloquent Arabs of the desert, and consecrated in the eyes of the scholars of the time. Some of these had become the trivial expressions of the vulgar, and it is difficult for Englishmen to understand the literary taste which attached such importance to them. It is as if in this country the most intellectual and learned men of the day devoted themselves to elucidating such phrases as "he cut his stick," "he kicked the bucket," "he hopped the twig," "mind your P's and Q's," "we were all at sixes and sevens," "no mistake;" and as if the most gifted author of the time were to produce a composition containing all these expressions, and append an interpretation to the effect that "he cut his stick" was a phrase derived from the backwoods, and signified to depart, since a man in the forest when about to go on a journey cut a stick from a tree to aid him in walking; that to "kick the bucket" and "hop the twig" were seamen's phrases, signifying to commit suicide by hang-

ing, or by jumping from the yard arm; that "mind your P's and Q's" was originally a theatrical phrase, "mind your cues," the addition of "P's" being an unintelligent corruption; that "no mistake" had its origin in the answer of the Duke of Wellington to Mr. Huskisson: "There is no mistake, there can be no mistake;" and that as for the phrase "sixes and sevens," God alone knew what it meant. This is scarcely an exaggeration of the purport of much of the Assemblies, with the difference that the phrases which Ḥarîri embodies in his writings were supposed to be idioms of a classic tongue, and to have first passed from the lips of a heroic race. The favour with which such compositions were received, bears witness to the zeal and almost Massoretic diligence with which the educated class studied the records of their language and history.

The grammatical questions are of hardly less importance in the author's eyes. His other works show the subtlety of his intellect and the fastidiousness of his taste, and many of the precepts which he utters in them he enforces by examples in the Assemblies. Yet there is a peculiarity in his art which is worth noticing. Where a question is doubtful, and two men of eminence whose opinions are probable, have differed, Ḥarîri will make use of a form which there is reason to believe he disapproves, as if his object were rather to continue the controversy than decide it. A conspicuous instance of this occurs in the thirty-fifth Assembly, in the phrase فاذا هو اياه, of which the nearest rendering in English is "Behold he was him!" that is, the person I looked at was Abû Zayd. Now a controversy had been carried on between the schools of Basra and Kufa on this matter;

the Basrians held the phrase to be incorrect, and that one ought to say فاذا هو هو, "Behold he was he." The grammatical question is discussed in the notes to the twenty-fourth Assembly, and need not be dwelt upon here; but a commentator expresses his wonder that Ḥarîri, who was a Basrian, should use a phrase condemned by the grammarians of his city, and one which most people looked upon as faulty. This controversy, however, was classic, inasmuch as it had been originated by one of the greatest of the grammarians, Sîbawayh, and was said to have been the cause of his death. The story is as follows:—Sîbawayh was one day in the presence of Harûn ar Reshîd, or as others say of Yaḥya ibn Khâlid the Bermeki, when they were discussing grammatical questions, and he asked Al Kisâ'î, which is right, "I thought that the scorpion was different from the zenbûr, and behold هو هو," or "behold هو اياه." "The latter," said Al Kisâ'î. Sîbawayh contradicted him, and the Khalif resolved to refer to some native Arabs. Al Kisâ'î then contrived that he should refer to a tribe who were not of pure speech, and these said that Sîbawayh was in the wrong. The great grammarian angrily departed from court, and retired to Khorasan, where he soon died. Ḥarîri seeks to awaken in his hearers the memory of this anecdote by using the condemned form, which would bring to their minds the celebrated controversy. So in the thirty-seventh Assembly the expression سُقِطَ الفتي في يده, imitated from Koran vii. 148, gives to the impersonal verb of the original a faulty construction, though Ḥarîri has himself noticed this very error in his book called the "Pearl." But a controversy had taken place on this subject involving even the proper reading of the

verb in the Koran; and Ḥarîri, by making use of what he does not approve, shows that he is not ignorant of the discussion. Several instances of a similar kind will be found in the notes, and I will notice but one more. In the thirty-sixth Assembly انور is used where, from Ḥarîri's own explanation in the "Pearl," it is plain that accuracy requires اشدّ انارة. The author's design may have been to claim for this particular word a licence derived from popular use.

From these examples the reader will be able to judge how intimate a knowledge of the niceties of the tongue may be obtained from the study of Ḥarîri and his commentators. An acquaintance with the pagan antiquity also necessarily follows an examination of his incessant allusions. These, for the most part, occur in the form of proverbs, and of such popular sayings as have been already mentioned. The Arabic word مثل does indeed comprise any phrase current among the people, or any sententious utterance of the past time, and is not confined to moral apophthegms. The Arabs, in imitation of the Greeks, began at an early time to make collections of the multudinous proverbs of their language. The collection of Maydâni is invaluable, as preserving for us some of the oldest forms of Arab speech,—perhaps the most primitive utterances of the race. There is hardly a celebrated occurrence in early Arab story that is not illustrated by one or more of these phrases, which were attributed to the heroes and heroines of the old time; and whether authentic or not have, undoubtedly, for the most part, come down from the times of purely oral tradition. A whole series of proverbs connects itself with the history of Jathîmet al Abrash, Queen Zebbâ, and Ḳoṣayr.

Another belongs to the story of Kolayb Wâ'il and the war of Basûs. When the poet 'Obayd ibn al Abraṣ was sacrificed by the king of Hira at the tomb of his boon companions, 'Obayd uttered sentences which became proverbial. Many of these proverbs indicate an archaic state of the language, and the combinations of letters are less euphonious than in the dialect of Ḳoraysh. Every page of Ḥarîri's work contains some of these relics of a past time, and they are imbedded in the Assemblies like the stones of a Roman ruin in the walls of a modern Italian villa. Whole passages are but a cento of primeval phrases, mingled with sentences of the Koran or the Traditions, and remarkable idioms from poets of repute. The proverb served to call the hearer's attention to the incident from which it was said to have arisen; and if he were a pupil, he that recited the composition to him would take care to examine him respecting the origin of the saying, and the precise form in which it had been most authoritatively handed down. An instance of the exactitude with which the purists required these proverbs to be used is given in the work of Maydâni, where it is said that the proverb ضيّعتِ اللبن في الصيف: "Thou (a woman) didst lose the milk in the summer," should be used in the feminine singular, even though it be addressed to a male or to more than one person, since it was first uttered by 'Amr ibn 'Odas to his wife Dakhtenûs."[1]

The Koran is exemplified by continual quotations, and these are full of instruction for the foreign scholar. But the sacred book was so well known to those for whom the Assemblies were composed, that I cannot

[1] Ar. Prov. II., 197, and De Sacy's Ḥarîri II., 577.

think the author had in view the inculcation of any special knowledge. Moreover he does not appear to quote difficult passages, or those which require special interpretation; he rather endeavours to show his wit by the use of it in a strange and unexpected manner, as, for instance, at the end of the third Assembly.

Before proceeding to consider other peculiarities of this work, and especially the artificial character of so many of the pieces, it will be as well to give a short summary of the Assemblies which do not appear in this volume, so that the book may be considered as a whole. The preface and the first twenty-six are here translated, and as each has a short argument or introduction, there needs no further mention of them. The remaining twenty-four are not inferior in merit, though the repetition of similar adventures and similar rhetoric becomes monotonous. They are also, if possible, more elaborate than those which are placed earlier in the work, and two or three of them are of exceeding difficulty. In the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth, the author produces compositions resembling those of the sixth and twenty-sixth. In the sixth is given an address, the words of which are alternately with and without pointed letters. In the twenty-sixth the artifice is varied, and each alternate letter is pointed, the others being unpointed. In the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth the orthographical feat is again changed, for they contain compositions in which every letter is destitute of points. In the former, Abû Zayd preaches an eloquent sermon on the certainty and the terrors of death; in the latter, after describing a loaf of bread and a flint in enigmatical language, somewhat after the style of the eighth, he

indites a benediction at a wedding, into which he had inveigled Ḥârith. Both of these addresses are composed of letters without a single point. The thirtieth is remarkable for the use of what are called Sâsâni phrases, that is, the cant of beggars, mountebanks, prestigiators, and the like. Ḥârith enters by chance into a house hung with rags, which he discovers to be a place of call for such people. A wedding is going on, and the beggar bridegroom, in gaudy apparel, takes his seat with the dignity of king Munthir ibn Mâ as-Semâ. Then steps forward an old man, who, of course, turns out to be Abû Zayd, and delivers himself of a wedding sermon, with the regular exordium of the mosque. In this address the Koran is mixed up with the metaphorical jargon of vagabonds after the strangest fashion, and at the close Abû Zayd performs the marriage ceremony. This *argot* appears to have been thought not unworthy of study, for one Abû Dulaf wrote a *kaṣîdeh* in it, setting forth the habits and ways of life of such people, and their singular dialect.[1]

The thirty-first Assembly is a composition of exquisite beauty. Ḥârith makes the pilgrimage to Mecca, and there finds Abû Zayd, who addresses the worshippers first in the usual rhymed prose, and then in verse, on the duties of true religion. The Ḥajj, he tells them, does

[1] This Abû Dulaf is not to be confounded with Abû Dulaf al 'Ajili, the celebrated general of the Khalifs Ma'mûn and Mo'taṣim, and the founder or extender of the city of Kerej, from which the twenty-fifth Assembly takes its name. This mistake has been made even by Moṭarrezi (see Fr. note, p. 145 of Vol. II. of De Sacy's Ḥarîri). The great Abû Dulaf was certainly a writer as well as a warrior, but the Abû Dulaf who wrote the poem in question was a different person, and is known as Al Khazraji.

not consist in hastening on camels to the holy city, or wearying the body, or parting from home and children, but in adding to these performances abstinence from sin, purity of intention, and the practice of virtue; for "washing in fonts cleanses not from immersion in sins, the baring of the body compensates not for the laying up of guilt, nor will the donning of the pilgrim's garb avail him who clothes himself with the forbidden." The verses which follow are inspired by the loftiest morality. When he has concluded Ḥârith approaches him, but Abû Zayd declares that he has a vow not to associate with any one during his pilgrimage, nor to make gain, nor to recite his pedigree, nor to ask alms. As the pilgrims pass by on their journey he again addresses them in edifying verse.

The thirty-second is of a very different character, and is, perhaps, the strangest and most difficult in the work. Indeed, without plentiful commentary, it would be perfectly unintelligible. It is that which the author alludes to in the preface when he speaks of "legal decisions dependent on the use of words." Abû Zayd is discovered playing the part of a mufti, or jurisconsult, amid a tribe of Arabs, and bidding them ask questions of him. One of them steps forward, and says that he has gathered a hundred questions from people learned in the law, and he propounds them one by one to Abû Zayd. The peculiarity of these questions is that each contains a word which may be understood in two senses, the design of the questioner being to test not only Abû Zayd's knowledge of the Moslem canon law, but also his acquaintance with the niceties of the language. Abû Zayd is represented as discerning the hidden meaning of each question, and as

returning an answer which, while directly contrary to that which might be expected, is yet correct if the ambiguous word be taken in its less popular signification. For instance, it is asked, "Does a man ill who neglects to wash his فأس (hatchet)?" Abû Zayd replies, "Yes, it is as though he washed not his head:" for فأس signifies not only a hatchet, but also the upper part of the back of the head. Again, it is asked, "May a man say his prayers after he has been carrying جرو (puppies)?" which are unclean animals. The answer is, "Yes; it is no more than if he had carried beans." جرو signifies a puppy, or the whelp of a beast of prey, and also the young cucumber, or the pomegranate. And so of the whole hundred questions. Similar puzzles were not unknown in Europe, as the question, "Num peccatum est occidere patrem suum," where not "one's own father," but "the father of swine," is meant. This Assembly is an elaborate exercise on the synonyms of the language. It may be noticed that the decisions are according to the rite of Ash Shâfi'î, to which Ḥarîri belonged.

The thirty-third presents nothing worthy of especial notice. Abû Zayd, feigning to be palsied, recites verses which obtain for him the alms of the people, and when discovered by Ḥârith, confesses his imposture. In the thirty-fourth, Abû Zayd sells his son to Ḥârith as a slave, taking care, however, that the boy shall exclaim to him, "I am Joseph, I am Joseph," words taken from Koran xii, 90. Ḥârith thinks that the boy is only telling his name, whereas he was indicating that he was free born, and ought not to be sold any more than Joseph, the son of Jacob, ought to have been sold by his brethren. The boy obtains his liberty, and Ḥârith loses his money.

The thirty-fifth is a composition in the style of the eighth, and the earlier part of the twenty-ninth. Abû Zayd describes a wine-cask metaphorically under the name of a maiden, for whom, as he tells the people, he desires to purchase wedding attire. They give him money, and it turns out that by the wedding attire is meant a flagon and a cup, which were necessary to wed, as it were, the wine-cask to the drinker.

The thirty-sixth contains twenty conundrums, all of the same form: "What word signifies so and so?" For instance, what word signifies "Receive a thousand denars." The answer is, هادية (she that guides aright): for ها means "take," and دية is the fine or blood-wit for killing a man, which was fixed at a thousand denars. It is needless to give any further specimens of the author's ingenuity. The answers to these conundrums, and to the legal questions in the thirty-second, are given by Ḥarîri himself, at the end of the respective Assemblies.

The thirty-seventh exhibits Abû Zayd and his son before the Kadi of Ṣa'dah, obtaining money from him, as usual, by trickery. The father accuses the son of disobedience, and the son declares that his father had sought to degrade him by making him a beggar. The son recites some lines against beggary which he says his father had once taught him, and which justified him in disobeying the paternal commands; and the father retorts with others, which the son had recited to him, in praise of making gain in every way possible. The dialogue is kept up with great spirit, and the adventure ends by the Kadi bestowing his bounty on both.

In the thirty-eighth, Abû Zayd addresses the governor of a town in some fine verses in praise of liberality to men

of genius, and is rewarded as usual. In the thirty-ninth, the adventure is somewhat after the fashion of the twelfth. Ḥârith is on ship-board, about to make a voyage, when a voice is heard from the shore, in the darkness, begging a passage. The stranger is taken on board, and soon informs the travellers that he has a talisman, a form of words handed down from the prophets, which would guard them from all dangers. He repeats it, and they think it futile; but, at a port whither they are forced to put in through a storm that overtakes them, Abû Zayd finds great lamentation among the servants of a noble family on account of the long labour of their mistress in childbirth, and he writes for them a copy of verses in which the child is warned of the miseries of the world, and recommended not to come into it. This, which seems the very contrary of what the lady's case demanded, is hung round her neck, and her safe delivery follows. Abû Zayd is handsomely rewarded.

The fortieth is a quarrel between Abû Zayd and his handsome young wife, who go before the stingy judge of Tebrîz, he to complain of her contumacy, she of his abuse of his conjugal rights. The contention is remarkable, not only for the fury with which they rail at each other, but for the learning they display. "I married thee," says Abû Zayd, "and found thee all that was bad. But I concealed thy faults, though if Shîrîn had given thee her beauty, and Zobaydeh her riches, and Bilḳîs her throne, and Bûrân her bed, and Az Zebbâ her kingdom, and Râbi'ah her piety, and Khindaf her glory, and Al Khansâ her poetry on her Ṣakhr, I would have hated thee to be my wife." She answers, "O thou baser than Mâdir, with more vices than Abû Dulâmeh's mule, know

that if thou wert Al Ḥasan in utterance and admonition, Ash Sha'bi in learning and memory, Al Khalîl in prosody and grammar, Jerîr in love song and satire, Ḳoss in purity of speech and in discoursing, 'Abd al Ḥamîd in eloquence and writing, Abû 'Amr in Koran-reading and inflection, Ibn Ḳorayb in recitations from the Arabs, I would not keep thee." The quarrel is, of course, a feigned one, and the wife's address supplied by Abû Zayd himself. The rest of the adventure is of the usual kind.

The forty-first contains a sermon of Abû Zayd, by means of which he and his son extract money from the public. The forty-second contains riddles, not necessarily dependent like the conundrums of the thirty-sixth on the play of words, but indicating a thing by the description of it, as:—

What is he, who weds two sisters, both openly and secretly, but none accuses him for it?

When he visits the one, he visits also the other; and though husbands may be partial, he is not so.

He increases his visits as his wives grow gray: now, this is an affection rare among husbands.

The answer to this is, the pencil used to place the *koḥl*, or ointment, on the eyes: the two eyelids are the wives, each of which it anoints at the same time, without partiality, and as they grow old, the necessity for anointing them increases.

The forty-third has an adventure too long to relate, and bears the name of the "Virgin and Matron," because it contains the reasons for and against marrying either of these classes of ladies. The forty-fourth introduces us to more riddles, which this time, however, depend for their solution, like the legal questions of the thirty-

second, on the various significations of the same word. Thus:—

"I have seen Arabs in a barren year roast a *rag* for food, and it satisfied them." خِرقة which signifies a *rag*, signifies also *a swarm of locusts*.

"I have seen *scribes*, whose fingers never wrote a letter, and who read not what is written in books." كاتبون which signifies *scribes*, signifies also *cobblers*.

The forty-fifth like the fortieth is a quarrel between Abû Zayd and his wife, before a judge, with the intention of attracting his bounty. The forty-sixth is one of the most elaborate in the work. Ḥârith being at Ḥimṣ (Emessa), a place noted for the stupidity of its inhabitants, like Abdera among the Greeks, sees a schoolmaster, one of a class especially famous for their dulness, instructing his pupils; he approaches, thinking to be entertained by the poor man's blunders, but finds to his astonishment that the children were able to accomplish the most surprising feats. One of them recites a poem consisting entirely of unpointed letters; the next writes out some which not only have every letter pointed, but are full of assonances and alliterations; a third produces lines of which the words consist alternately of pointed and unpointed letters; a fourth gives verses in which there is *tejnis* or homogeneity in sound or in letters between each two successive words; the next produces a couplet, each line of which begins and ends with the same syllables. Then the nature of the exercises changes, and some lines are given containing words which ought to be written with the letter س, but about which some Arabs are doubtful. Then come the words which should be written with ص, then those that may be written with either. At last one

pupil gives in verse the rules for writing the verb whose last letter is weak. Another repeats a poem comprising all the words in the language which contain ظ; this table is especially useful, since a common mistake among the Arabs was to confound ظ with ض; the old Semitic language having a less variety of sounds than the cultivated Arabic, as may be seen by a comparison with the Hebrew. It need not be said that the schoolmaster is Abû Zayd. In the forty-seventh, Abû Zayd is discovered following the despised calling of a cupper or bleeder, but the adventure does not call for notice. The forty-eighth, called Ḥarâmîyeh, the first composed, has been already described. In the forty-ninth, Abû Zayd, in his old age, lauds the name and calling of Sâsân, the prince of the beggars, and urges his son to follow the noble and lucrative art of mendicancy. This Assembly is one of the finest pieces of rhetoric in the work. But perhaps the first place in regard of merit should be given to the fiftieth and last Assembly, called "of Basra." In this composition, to which I have already referred, Ḥârith exhibits his hero as penitent and reformed. In it is introduced a most eloquent eulogium of the city of Basra; the hymn of Abû Zayd breathes the purest spirit of devotion. Ḥârith weeps in sympathy with his repentance, as he had formerly wept for his misdeeds, and in the end they part to meet no more.

It remains that I should say something concerning the style of this singular work, which, as the reader is now aware, is a continuous display of rhetorical artifices, and is full, from beginning to end, of alliteration, assonance, rhyme, paronomasia, and what Europeans are apt to con-

sider merely verbal conceits. These caprices, so alien from our taste, have since pervaded not only the Arabic literature, but the literatures which, like the Persian, the Hindustani, and the Turkish, have accepted the rhetoric of the Arab scholars, and have followed their canons. We find the authors, not of one age and nation, but of all the Moslem world, for many centuries, delighting in what seem to us the poorest artifices of composition, cursed by a vitiated and pestilent taste, and degrading their genius by mingling the loftiest themes with displays of verbal cleverness, in no way above the level of the pun and the conundrum. If the Persians borrowed their conceits from the Arabs, they bettered the instruction, and the reaction of their literary influence tended to confirm the taste of their masters. But it would be a narrow view of the subject to regard such compositions as the Assemblies as the result of literary fashion or scholastic pedantry. The Arabic student cannot but perceive that the language lends itself with singular readiness to responsiveness and parallelism of sound, and that assonance and paronomasia offer themselves almost unbidden. The triliterity of the root, and the ramification from it of a vast number of forms, each of which has an accordance of sound with the same form of other roots, give a natural and inevitable similitude to Arabic words, which forces itself on the attention of the orator and his audience. Then the development of almost every abstract idea from a root which signifies a strictly material action; the primitive meaning being ever dimly visible to the mind's eye of the people behind the derivative meaning, and not, as in our words of Latin and Greek provenance, wholly lost, tended to suggest com-

parisons between the multitudinous ideas associated with a single root, which gave an involuntary impulse towards paronomasia. We do, indeed, find a tendency towards these rhetorical figures in the very earliest productions of the Semitic race. The alliterations, the assonances, the antitheses of sound, the evident paronomasia, and, above all, the strange etymologies of the Bible, bear witness that, even in the most remote times, the most simple and noble of composers were not without a kind of verbal consciousness; repressed, indeed, in them by the pure and classic spirit of their genius, but still the germ from which in later times were developed the puerilities of the Rabbins and the artificial rhetoric of the Arabic authors.

The instinct to gratify the ear—or something deeper than the ear—by accordance of words, and to create a similitude between the sound and the sense, is common to every race, and, if regarded philosophically, will not be found worthy of contempt or reprobation. It has been especially strong in our Teutonic branch of the human family, which not only has had an alliterative and assonant poetry in former ages, but still fondly clinges to phrases and proverbs which recal the ancient rhythm. No one would wish such expressions as "to have and to hold," "bed and board," "kith and kin," "last not least," to be banished by a pseudo-classic taste from the use of the nation. In Hebrew such combinations appear with frequency, and the alliterative accordance which they exemplify appears to have almost stood in the place of metre as a poetical instrument. From these to paronomasia, and play on words, there is but a step. Of this figure, a few examples may be given. At Psalm xl. 3,

and lii. 6, according to the numbering of our version, there is a play on words between "see" and "fear," which occurs also elsewhere. Compare also Isaiah v. 7, lvii. 6, and lxi. 3; also on the same word as this last Job xxx. 19, and xlii. 6; also Psalm xviii. 7, Ecclesiastes, vii. 6. To these may be added the chant of Samson at Judges xv. 16, and perhaps the account of the sons of Jair at x. 4.

But it is in connection with proper names that this tendency is most manifest. We may either see in the etymologies of the Pentateuch the ingenious labours of Hebrew priests and scholars, anxious to give an applicability to names the origin of which was lost, just as Ya'rob is made by the Arabs to have been the first man who spoke Arabic, and Muzayḳîyah is said to have been so called because he tore up his clothes every evening; or we may suppose that the etymologies were framed at a very early period, almost unconsciously, by the people themselves, who, being accustomed to name their children, their habitations, and remarkable places by apposite terms, and being hardly able to conceive an appellation without a meaning, instinctively sought the signification of the patriarchal names, and sometimes moulded the legend in accordance with the supposed etymology. It is reasonable to conclude that both these sources have contributed to the large stock of derivations which we find in the Pentateuch. Some of them seem too artificial to have arisen spontaneously among the people: they resemble rather the laboured comparisons of scholars than the similarities which would strike the popular ear. But the greater part are probably derived from remote and unlettered tradition. It is unreasonable to doubt the antiquity of the speech of

Lamech, at Genesis v. 29, which contains a play upon the name of Noah; or of Noah's curse and blessing, at ix. 25, in which the name of Japhet is similarly treated. Furthermore, the name in some cases has evidently influenced the narrative, as where Abraham and Sarah successively *laugh* in connection with the birth of Isaac, (Genesis xvii. 17, and xviii. 12; compare also xxi. 6.); as also in the unholy ancestry attributed by Israel to its enemies, Moab and Ammon. We may also fairly allow a popular origin to the etymology of the word Manna, suggested at Exodus xvi. 15. But whether originating with the people or the learned, we find at a very early period in Hebrew history a tendency, which cannot be mistaken, to reflect upon names and significations, to play and refine upon them. In the later writers, this spirit is still more manifest. A proper name frequently suggests paronomasia, and the instinctive tendency towards this figure throws a light on the formation of the etymologies of which I have spoken. Compare Isaiah xxi. 2, with regard to the name of Elam; Jer. vi. 1, with regard to Tekoah; Ezekiel xxv. 16, to Cherithim; Jer. xlviii. 2, to Heshbon; Nehemiah ix. 24, to Canaan. A number of others may be discovered by an attentive reading of the prophetical books. But enough has been said to show that the germ of those literary tendencies, which were in after ages developed in the Arabic literature, existed from the earliest times among their Semitic brethren.

A still more striking example of artificiality in composition is afforded by those alphabetical pieces, which have raised so much curiosity and discussion among scholars. The Hebrew literature did not escape the fate which con-

demns nations to lose much of their poetical vigour and spontaneity by a long continued culture, especially when they restrict themselves, as did the ancient nations for the most part, to a traditional range of ideas. From Athens to Alexandria, from Alexandria to Constantinople, we may trace the decline of Greek letters—ever more learned, ever more laborious, and ever more feeble. The later ages of the Hebrew literature were, indeed, illustrated by compositions of surpassing grandeur and beauty, such as the pieces appended to the Book of Isaiah (chapter xl. to the end); the Lamentations, of which the greater part are in the alphabetical form; and the Book of Daniel, which, composed probably as late as the second century before Christ, opened the magnificent series of apocalyptic writings, the germ of which may be found in the prophecies of Ezekiel. But it is not the less evident that, even before the Captivity, composition had become more the task of a literary class, prone to imitate rather than originate, and to look for inspiration in the works of its predecessors rather than in nature and human life. Among these arose the alphabetical poem, in which the compiler seems to have sought to add freshness to his groupings of ancient thoughts by a new and striking literary device. The success of this kind of composition bears witness to the taste of the Jews and the nations related to them. Similar compositions appeared among the Syrians and the Samaritans, and the neo-Hebrew, or Rabbinical literature, is full of them.[1] The Biblical poems, which belong to this order, are Psalms xxv., xxxiv., xxxvii., cxi., cxii., cxix., cxlv.; the description of the virtuous woman, at Proverbs xxxi. 10–31, and the Book of Lamentations, with the exception

[1] EWALD, Dichter des Alten Bundes, p. 202. Ed. 1866.

of the last chapter. In Psalms cxi. and cxii. the artifice is carried so far that not each verse, but each member of the verse, is alphabetical. In Lamentations iii., the verses are divided into twenty-two triplets, the verses of the triplets beginning with the twenty-two letters of the alphabet in succession. The hundred and nineteenth Psalm shows a still further elaboration of the same idea, and in its structure and purport bears a visible analogy to such productions as the Assemblies of Ḥarîri. In this lengthy composition the hundred and seventy-six verses are divided into twenty-two groups of eight verses each, and the verses of the groups begin with the twenty-two letters in alphabetical succession; that is, the eight verses of the first group begin with Aleph, the eight of the second group with Beth, the eight of the third group with Gimel, and so on. This Psalm has, however, a more remarkable peculiarity, inasmuch as the author strives in the true spirit of an Eastern scholar to attract the fancy to his theme, by introducing into every verse, without exception, a synonym for the word or commandment of God.

Before quitting this part of the subject, I will venture to suggest a comparison between the gnomic and sententious character of the Arabic poetry, as exhibited in the Assemblies, and some portions of the Old Testament—as the books of Job and Ecclesiastes—in which the pure Semitic spirit breathes, uncontrolled by national patriotism or Mosaic traditions. This, however, is a matter which must be left to the preception of the reader. Yet I cannot but think that in the figurative description of old age, in the last chapter of Ecclesiastes, I recognise a tendency to obscure poetical metaphor, which, trans-

mitted through many generations, darkens the work of the learned Basrian.

How far such a work as the Assemblies is to be ascribed to any influence of Byzantine scholarship is a question of some difficulty. There is no reason to believe that Ḥarîri took directly any ideas from the Greeks. He probably knew no language but his own, and all that he produced is to be traced to exclusively Arabic, or, at least, Moslem sources. But indirectly he, and the rest of his countrymen, could not fail to be influenced by the pedantry of Constantinople, which came to confirm and increase their own. In almost every age of the world we find a certain similarity between the pursuits of existing nations, as if the same informing spirit possessed them all, in spite of diversities of race, position, and history. In the time of Ḥarîri, Greek, Jew, Syrian and Arab had become grammarians, lexicographers, archæologists; the race of translators and commentators abounded in the east, and to the furthest limits of the Moslem west. Each race, except perhaps the haughty and exclusive Greeks, did indeed learn something from the others. The Syrians took their notions of grammar from the Greeks. All that the Arabs knew of Greek philosophy and science was from translations made into their language by Syrians, either from the Greek originals, or from former Syriac translations. On the other hand the Jews, in the tenth century, founded or re-cast their grammar under Arab influence, and even adopted the word فعل as their paradigm, though, from its containing a medial guttural, it insufficiently expresses the changes of the Hebrew verb. We find the philologers of the various languages vying with each other in industry;

we find Maydâni, the contemporary of Ḥarîri, collecting and explaining the national proverbs precisely in the manner of Suidas. No one can pretend to say that such an influence as this may not have extended from Constantinople to Basra, but of direct imitation of Greek authors there is nothing. The work with which the Assemblies will be most readily compared is the *Cassandra*, or *Alexandra*, of Lycophron. That was a poem composed in an age when the demon of pedantry had entered into poets and orators; when even the exquisite genius of Theocritus did not disdain to produce a poem in the form of a Syrinx. The *Cassandra* is an iambic poem of fourteen hundred and seventy lines, very famous in antiquity, though utterly neglected now. It is an almost unintelligible rhapsody, supposed to be uttered by the prophetical daughter of Priam, who from the top of a tower, where she is confined by her father's order, sees the fleet of Paris depart, and knows that it is to bring destruction on Troy. In her sacred fury, she pours forth a torrent of obscure and oracular verse. The epithets are gigantic and monstrous compounds, the language is ransacked for rare words, metaphor is heaped on metaphor, every person and every place are described, not by their ordinary names, but by some accidental relation, or by allusion to some obscure event; the prophetess passes from calamity to calamity with a Pythian enthusiasm which scorns the distinctions of paragraphs, and ends by lamenting that mankind will not believe the predictions she has uttered. This poem, if it can be called so, is but a linguistic and geographical puzzle. The war of Troy, the return of the Greek heroes, their dispersion over the shores of the Mediterranean, the planting of Greek and

Trojan colonies, the settlement of Æneas in Italy, the foundation of Rome, the wars between Europe and Asia, the expedition of Xerxes, and the conquests of Alexander, the descendant of Æacus and Dardanus, give opportunity for the display of boundless but useless learning. This production, which gained for the author the epithet of the "dark" Lycophron from the despairing scholars of antiquity, was not fully elucidated till the time of the brothers Tzetzes,[1] whose labours on it are a remarkable proof of the learning and industry of the Byzantines. Except in the display of erudition, there is no resemblance between Lycophron and Ḥarîri, nor do we find in the latter that impenetrable and perverse obscurity which distinguished the Greek. But it is possible that the fame of this work, at which successive generations of schoolboys had been made to labour, may have reached Arabic writers, and encouraged their tendency to learned display.

If we allow some share in the formation of such a taste to the predispositions of race and language, and something to the influence of foreign culture, we must also trace some elements of it to the peculiar studies of Islam. A strange feature in Ḥarîri's work is the number of compositions in which the merit is supposed to consist in the alternation of pointed and unpointed letters, or the exclusive use of one of these two kinds. It is not difficult to see how any tendency to these caprices which may have been innate in the learned Arabs must have been increased by the long controversies which had been held on the orthography of the Koran. On the proper use of

[1] The Commentary is attributed to Isaac, but it is almost certain that John had a large share in the work.

the diacritical points, on the question whether a letter should be with or without a point, whether it should be pointed above or below, depended the meaning of many passages of God's word. The early copies of the Koran were in a character singularly incomplete. There was hardly a chapter in which doubts were not raised as to the meaning of important passages. In the lifetime of the Prophet, when the sacred fragments were read publicly at Medina by those who knew their purport accurately, and were committed to memory by numbers of the faithful, these deficiencies were unnoticed; but as early as the time of Abû Bekr many of those who knew the Koran by heart were slain in the campaign against Musaylimeh the Liar, and 'Omar counselled the Khalif to cause a standard copy to be written.

This task was executed by Zayd ibn Thâbit, who first collected the Koran into a book. But great varieties of readings made the sense doubtful, and in the year 30 the Khalif 'Othmân undertook the recension which has ever since been the sacred text of the Moslems. He committed the work to Zayd ibn Thâbit, 'Abd Allah ibn Az Zobayr, and other distinguished persons, with orders to choose the best reading of each passage, and not to give the various conflicting readings, as appears to have been done in the first edition. All who could throw any light on the Prophet's meaning were consulted, and 'Âyisheh in particular had great influence in determining the text; her testimony as to the Prophet's oral recitations being respectfully received as conclusive. The Koran was brought more completely into accord with the dialect of Ḳoraysh, since the Khalif commanded that in doubtful cases the language of the Prophet's family and country-

men should be preferred. Hence there remain very few dialectical peculiarities in the present Koran. But, when all was done, the text still remained very uncertain; and the difficulties of the Moslems were increased by the sudden corruption of the pure Arabic speech after the first conquests. Ḳoraysh or Temîm might have been able to detect the precise form and pronunciation of a word under its obscure orthography, but the settlers of the conquered lands, who in fifty years after the Hijra had almost lost the use of the classic desinences, required a clearer guidance. The efforts of Ḥajjâj ibn Yûsuf to settle the text of the Koran have been already referred to. Ibn Khallikân, in his life of the enlightened tyrant, says that the people used 'Othmân's copy for forty years, but in the days of 'Abd al Melik ibn Merwân erroneous readings had become numerous in Irak, so that Ḥajjâj bade his scribes set distinctive marks on the words of uncertain pronunciation, and Naṣr ibn 'Aṣim placed single or double dots to certain words. But as this did not give sufficient accuracy, the إعجام, or system of diacritical pointing now in use, was invented. The honour of giving fixity of meaning to the Koran belongs chiefly to Abû 'l Aswad and Khalîl ibn Aḥmed, though the latter is said to have superseded the system of pointing adopted by his predecessor, as well as that of the scribes of Ḥajjâj.[1] Abû 'l Aswad is said to have marked the vowels and the tanwîn, Khalîl ibn Aḥmed the hamzeh and teshdîd, the rowm and ishmâm. Thus the science of *pointing*, or determining which of two or more letters, similarly formed in ancient writing, was to be preferred,

[1] See note to McGuckin de Slane's translation of Ibn Khallikân. Vol. I, p. 364.

became of the highest interest. In our languages such accuracy is not needed, but in the Arabic, where every letter has and must have a value, where a change in a root letter is sufficient to transform one word into another, and a change in an augmentative letter may affect gender, number, and the other accidents of the root, the scholar was obliged to employ himself on the primary elements of speech. The formation of passives and plurals by internal vowel change, unexpressed in the usual orthography, must have tended still further to promote this minute scholarship. The compositions of pointed or unpointed letters, such as Ḥarîri delights in, may have been suggested, or at least encouraged, by a desire to embody the correct orthography of doubtful words. The author would fix them with their right pointing in a poem or address, of which the artifice would insure that they should not be misspelt.

There was, furthermore, a religious sanction for this careful study of the alphabet. One of the most mysterious attributes of the Koran was its essential and eternal connection with the Arabic language. In that language it had not only been revealed, but had existed before the world and time. "This (the Koran)," said Mohammed, "is a clear Arab tongue." Koran xvi. 105 (compare xxvi. 195). If a confirmation of this unity of the sacred book and the sacred language were needed, it would be found in the prefixion to some of the Suras of isolated letters, whose meaning no man knew, but which had undoubtedly a divine quality. If Arabic words, which have equivalents in foreign tongues, had alone been revealed, it might be held that there was no essential connection between the revelation and the language; but when sepa-

rate letters, having no idea affixed to them, were brought down from on high, it could not be doubted that the ineffable sanctity of the Arabic language was thereby figured. In course of time a mystic interpretation was given to these letters, which is carried to the extreme in the commentary of Bayḍâwi. At the beginning of the second Sura he comments the letters *elif*, *lâm*, *mîm*, which are prefixed to it, and takes occasion to show that the presence of these monograms in the Koran is plainly miraculous. He points out that the letters are used in such a manner as to indicate a profound knowledge of scientific grammar. As Mohammed was uninstructed, such a knowledge could only have come from God himself. For instance, there are fourteen letters thus prefixed to Suras of the Koran, and fourteen is just the half of twenty-eight, the total of the letters when *elif* is not distinguished from hamzeh. These fourteen letters, moreover, are to be found in twenty-nine Suras, which is just the whole number of letters in the alphabet, if *elif* be reckoned. Again, the half of each of the different classes of letters are thus employed. Of the ten weakly articulated letters, namely those which make up the words ستشحثك خصفة, five are to be found in these monograms; while of the other eighteen, which are strongly articulated, nine are to be so found. The grammatical forms which take an augment never exceed in length the number of seven letters, hence the Almighty has introduced into these monograms seven out of the ten augmentative letters. These are but a few of the discoveries which in the time of Bayḍâwi had been made concerning the monograms of the Koran, and which the orthodox commentator explains with undoubting faith.

In the age of Ḥarîri these interpretations were in high favour; indeed, Baydâwi does little but reproduce the comments of Zamakhshari in the Keshshâf, who himself followed other doctors of an earlier time. Zamakhshari tells us in his preface that being asked by his admirers to produce a commentary on the Koran, his first care was to write something on these monograms, as a specimen of the loftiness and the difficulty of the enterprise. It will thus easily be perceived that exercises in the arrangement of letters had not among the Arabs that character of futility which they bear with us.

The imitations of Ḥarîri have been numerous. Sylvestre de Sacy gives, in his edition, a Hebrew version of the third Assembly by the Rabbin Jehuda, son of Al Khâriji, and mentions in his Introduction that Jehuda also wrote an independent work in the same style. It is curious to see the sober majesty of the Hebrew tongue condescend to such an imitation, and to observe that the Bible takes the place of the Koran in the allusions with which the piece abounds. De Sacy also mentions an imitation in Arabic, composed by Abû 't Ṭâhir ibn Moḥammed ibn Yûsuf of Cordova. The writer produced fifty Assemblies to correspond with his model, and in the title to the work lays stress upon the pains they cost him (Chrest: Arabe iii. 180). An imitation was also produced in Syriac towards the close of the thirteenth century. The limpid, richly vowelled, and graceful Arabic must, however, have been indifferently represented in the clumsy and rugged dialect of the north.

Yet the influence of Ḥarîri is not to be measured merely by the number of professed imitations that have been produced. His style has more or less modified the

style of all the more ambitious writing that has appeared in the Arabic language since his time. In the Timur of Ibn 'Arabshah, who wrote in the first half of the fifteenth century, we find the influence of Ḥarîri as strong as it had been in his own age, and among his own people. Nor does it even now show any sign of extinction. Every man in the East who seeks the reputation of a scholar and a gentleman endeavours to understand the Assemblies. Among the few works of merit which men of Arab tongue have produced in recent times are the Assemblies of Naṣîf al Yazaji of Beyrout, which are here and there cited in my notes. This book is a perfect imitation of Ḥarîri, whose diction and manner are reproduced with surprising skill. Naṣîf certainly has little of the poetical power of his great original, but in curious learning he almost equals him. As, perhaps, the chief living representative of the ancient culture this author deserves our notice. He is a native of the Lebanon, has never quitted his own country, knows no language but his own, and is said to contemn European knowledge as worthless. Though a Christian he has devoted his life to a profound study of the language, history, literature, and grammar of the Arabs. Many years ago he published a letter to De Sacy on some minute faults which he discovered in that learned orientalist's Commentary on Ḥarîri. He is the author of a treatise on grammar on the model of the Alfîyeh of Ibn Mâlik. It consists of more than a thousand verses of *rejez muzdawij*, in which the whole system of the Arab grammarians is condensed with wonderful ability, and it is accompanied by a commentary written by himself. No more complete exposition of the subject has ever been brought into a

volume of the same size. The labours of his predecessors during many centuries have given the author the means of producing a treatise at once comprehensive and minute, and for the advanced student who has mastered the commentary of Ibn ʿAḳîl on Ibn Mâlik, there is, I think, no work that might be more profitably taken in hand than the grammar of Naṣîf al Yazaji.[1] Another work of this author is a concise treatise on rhetoric, on the system of the Talkhîs al Miftâḥ of Jelâl ad dîn Moḥammed, as commented by Saʿd at Taftâzâni. The work of Naṣîf seems to be in a great measure an abstract of the Mukhtaṣar, or shorter commentary of the last named author, which has been printed at Calcutta, and it carries concision to such a point as to be almost unintelligible without the help of some more detailed and explanatory treatise. But as a manual to aid the memory, it is, no doubt, excellent. The most important work of Naṣîf, is, however, undoubtedly the volume of Assemblies. The hero is called Maymûn ibn Khizâm and the *râwi* is Sohayl ibn ʿAbbâd; the work itself bears the title Mejmaʿ al Baḥrayn, *the confluence of the two seas*, an allusion to an obscure passage at Koran xviii. 59, which it is useless to discuss here. The Assemblies of Naṣîf are even more full of proverbs and traditionary sayings than those of Ḥarîri, which they have been written to supplement. The author, living entirely in the past, has brought together an immense number of phrases illustrative of Arabic life and language, both before and after Islam. But the original feature in his compositions is the introduction of Arab art and science, and the treatment of

[1] The title of this work is نار القري في شرح جوف الفرا a fanciful appellation which need not be explained here.

every subject with a direct scholastic purpose. It need hardly be said that the author never profanes his text by admitting a Frankish idea, or accepts any scientific principle that is not recommended by the orthodox tradition of centuries. Thus in the fourth Assembly we have a medical question concerning the proportion of the four اخلاط, or humours of man, and are told that in properly constituted bodies the phlegm is a sixth of the blood, the yellow gall a sixth of the phlegm, and the black gall three-fourths of the yellow. The sixth Assembly is full of curious information concerning the special names of banquets according to their occasion, as a birth, a circumcision, a wedding: the fires that were traditional among the pagan Arabs, as the fire by which they conjured rain, the fire by which they swore confederacy, the fire which they lighted when one hated by them departed as an enchantment against his return. It must be remembered that these compositions are intended to be read with a master, or to be copiously commented, so that every line may be made the subject of a lecture on antiquities. The traditional names for the hours of the day and night, for the winds, the epithets applied to horses, according to their order in a race, are collected in pithy verses intended to be committed to memory. The eleventh contains an exposition of the Arabic prosody, the twenty-eighth treats of astronomy. In the fifteenth is a copy of verses in which no letter is pointed, and then one in which every letter is pointed, also verses in which the alternate letters, or the alternate words, have points. The twentieth has verses which are the same whether read forward or backward, and others which when read one way are laudatory, but, when read the other way, are satirical.

In short, all Ḥarîri's artifices are imitated, and even surpassed, by his laborious imitator. The Assemblies of Naṣîf should not be neglected by the Arabic student, for they are full of instruction; all that they require is a fuller commentary to explain their ambiguities and their references to obscure traditions. This could best be supplied by the author himself. My best thanks are due to Professor Ameuney, of King's College, London, for calling my attention to the works of this remarkable contemporary scholar, as well as for many other inestimable services.

From the time of Schultens, versions of parts of Ḥarîri's work have been made into Latin or modern European tongues with more or less success. Schultens translated six Assemblies; De Sacy in his Chrestomathie has given two with his usual accuracy. Other partial attempts have been made by different scholars, but the renderings are said to be extremely defective. A Latin version of the greater part of the work was published by C. R. S. Peiper, in 1832, but the translator was either not fully competent for his task, or else did not take the pains to obtain and study the best edition of the original, for his book abounds with errors. It is, moreover, written in the worst style of professorial Latin, and conveys in its form and spirit no idea of the original. A more worthy rendering is that of Mr. Preston, Laudian Professor of Arabic at Cambridge, who has published an English version of twenty of the Assemblies. Mr. Preston's translation is throughout accurate and scholarly, and its only fault is excessive amplification, in which the rhythm and diction of Ḥarîri are almost dissipated. The book which is now offered to the public is, I believe, the

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first attempt at a complete translation of Ḥarîri's work with such annotations as shall both instruct the general reader and aid the student to acquire a knowledge of the original. How far the object has been achieved, it is for others than myself to determine.

THE PREFACE OF AL ḤARÎRI.

IN THE NAME OF GOD THE MERCIFUL, MOST MERCIFUL.

SAID the Excellent, the Incomparable, Abû Moḥammed al Ḳâsim ibn ʿAlî ibn Moḥammed ibn ʿOthmân Al Ḥarîri of Baṣrah (God cool his resting-place).

O GOD, we praise thee for what perspicuity thou hast taught, and what enunciation thou hast inspired; as we praise thee for what bounty thou hast enlarged, what mercy thou hast diffused:—And we take refuge with thee from the vehemence of fluency and the immoderation of talkativeness, as we take refuge with thee from the vice of inarticulateness and the shame of hesitation.—And by thee we seek to be kept from temptation through the flattery of the praiser and the connivance of the favourer, as we seek to be kept from exposure to the defaming of the slanderer and the betrayal of the informer.—And we ask pardon of thee if our desires carry us into the region of ambiguities, as we ask pardon if our steps advance to the domain of errors.—And we ask of thee succour which shall lead us aright, and a heart turning with justice, and a tongue adorned with truth, and a speech strengthened with demonstration, and accuracy that shall keep us from mistake, and resolution that shall conquer caprice, and perception by

which we may estimate duly:—And that thou wilt help us by thy guidance to conceive, and enable us by thy assistance to express;—That thou wilt guard us from error in narration, and turn us from unseemliness in jesting;—That we may be secure from slanders of the tongue; that we may be free from the ill of tinselled speech;—That we walk not in the road of sin, nor stand in the place of repentance:—That we be not pursued by suit or censure, nor need to flee from hastiness to excuse.—O God, fulfil to us this wish; give us to attain to this desire: put us not forth of thy large shadow, make us not a morsel for the devourer.—For now we stretch forth to thee the hand of entreaty; we are thorough in humiliation to thee and abasement.—And we call down thy abundant grace and thy bounty that is over all, with humbleness of seeking and with the venture of hope.—Also approaching thee through the merits of Moḥammed, Lord of men, the Intercessor whose intercession shall be received at the congregation of judgment.—By whom thou hast set the seal to the prophets, and whose degree thou hast exalted to the highest heaven:—Whom thou hast described in thy clear-speaking Book, and hast said (and thou art the most truthful of sayers): "It is the word of a noble envoy, of him who is mighty in the presence of the Lord of the throne, having authority, obeyed, yea, faithful."—O God, send thy blessing on him and his House who guide aright, and his companions who built up the faith; and make us followers of his guidance and theirs, and profit us all by the loving of him and them: for thou art Almighty, and one meet to answer prayer.

And now: In a meeting devoted to that learning

whose breeze has stilled in this age, whose lights are nigh gone out—There ran a mention of the Assemblies which had been invented by Badî' az Zemân, the sage of Hamadân (God shew him mercy);—In which he had referred the composition to Abû'l Fatḥ of Alexandria and the relation to 'Îsa, son of Hishâm.—And both these are persons obscure, not known; vague, not to be recognized.—Then suggested to me one whose suggestion is as a decree, and obedience to whom is as a prize,—That I should compose Assemblies, following in them the method of Badî' (although the lame steed attains not to outrun like the stout one).—Then I reminded him of what is said concerning him who joins even two words, or strings together one or two verses:—And deprecated this position in which the understanding is bewildered, and the fancy misses aim, and the depth of the intelligence is probed, and a man's real value is made manifest:—And in which one is forced to be as a wood-gatherer by night, or as he who musters footmen and horsemen together:—Considering, too, that the voluble man is seldom secure or pardoned if he trips.—But when he consented not to forbearance, and freed me not from his demand, I assented to his invitation with the assenting of the obedient, and displayed in according with him all my endeavour;—And composed, in spite of what I suffered from frozen genius, and dimmed intelligence, and failing judgment, and afflicting cares,—Fifty Assemblies, comprising what is serious in language and lively, what is delicate in expression and dignified; the brilliancies of eloquence and its pearls, the beauties of scholarship and its rarities:—Besides what I have adorned them with of verses of the Koran and goodly

metonymies, and studded them with of Arab proverbs, and scholarly elegancies, and grammatical riddles, and decisions dependent on the meaning of words, and original addresses, and ornate orations, and tear-moving exhortations, and amusing jests:—All of which I have indited as by the tongue of Abû Zayd of Serûj, while I have attributed the relating of them to Al Ḥârith son of Hammâm, of Basra.—And whenever I change the pasture I have no purpose but to inspirit the reader, and to increase the number of those who shall seek my book.—And of the poetry of others I have introduced nothing but two single verses, on which I have based the fabric of the Assembly of Ḥolwân; and two others, in a couplet, which I have inserted at the conclusion of the Assembly of Kerej.—And, as for the rest, my own mind is the father of its virginity, the author of its sweet and its bitter.—Yet I acknowledge withal that Badî' (God shew him mercy) is a mighty passer of goals, a worker of wonders;—And that he who assays after him to the composition of an Assembly, even though he be gifted with the eloquence of Ḳodâmeh,—Does but scoop up of his overflow, and travels that path only by his guidance.—And excellently said one:—

If before it mourned, I had mourned my love for Su'da, then should I have healed my soul, nor had afterwards to repent.

But it mourned before me, and its mourning excited mine, and I said, "The superiority is to the one that is first."

Now I hope I shall not be, in respect of the playful style that I display, and the source that I repair to, like the beast that scratched up its death with its hoof, or he who cut off his nose with his own hand;—So as to be joined to those who are "most of all losers in their

works, whose course on earth has been in vain, while they count that they have done fair deeds."—Since I know that although he who is intelligent and liberal will connive at me, and he who is friendly and partial may defend me,—I can hardly escape from the simpleton who is ignorant, or the spiteful man who feigns ignorance;—Who will detract from me on account of this composition, and will give out that it is among the things forbidden of the law.—But yet, whoever scans matters with the eye of intelligence, and makes good his insight into principles—Will rank these Assemblies in the order of useful writings, and class them with the fables that relate to brutes and lifeless objects.—Now none was ever heard of whose hearing shrank from such tales, or who held as sinful those who related them at ordinary times.—Moreover, since deeds depend on intentions, and in these lies the effectiveness of religious obligations,—What fault is there in one who composes stories for instruction not for display, and whose purpose in them is the education and not the fablings?—Nay, is he not in the position of one who assents to doctrine, and "guides to the right path?"

Yet am I content if I may carry my caprice, and then be quit of it, without any debt against me or to me.

And of God I seek to be helped in what I purpose, and to be kept from that which makes defective, and to be led to that which leads aright.—For there is no refuge but to Him, and no seeking of succour but in Him, and no prospering but from Him, and no sanctuary but He.—On Him I rely, and to Him I have recourse.

THE FIRST ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF SAN'Â."

In this Assembly Al Ḥârith arrives in the town of Ṣan'â in Yemen, in great poverty; and, while seeking relief, encounters a crowd, which is gathered about a preacher. The discourse is a stern warning against self-indulgence, and an exhortation to repentance. Ḥârith, wishing to learn who the preacher is, follows him to a cave, and there finds him enjoying himself with good food, and even with wine. He begins to rebuke him, but the preacher, throwing off disguise, extemporizes some lines, confessing that his preaching was only a device to obtain charity. Ḥârith asks the attendant the name of the preacher, and is told that he is Abû Zayd, of Serûj. This Assembly is placed first because in it Ḥârith is represented as unacquainted with Abû Zayd, though the first Assembly composed by Ḥarîri is said to be that called Al Ḥarâmîyeh, which is placed forty-eighth in the collection.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related:—When I mounted the hump of exile, and misery removed me from my fellows, the shocks of the time cast me to Ṣan'â of Yemen.—And I entered it with wallets empty, manifest in my need; I had not a meal; I found not in my sack a mouthful.—Then began I to traverse its ways like one crazed, and to roam in its depths as roams the thirsting bird.—And wherever ranged my glances, wherever ran my goings at morn or even,—I sought some generous man before whom I might fray the tissue of my countenance, to whom I might be open concerning my need;—Or one well bred, whose aspect might dispel my pain, whose anecdote might relieve my thirsting.—Until the close of my circuit brought me, and the overture of courtesy guided me, to a wide place of concourse, in which was a throng and a wailing.—Then I entered the thicket of the crowd to explore what was drawing forth tears.—And I saw in the middle of the ring a

person slender of make;—Upon him was the equipment of pilgrimage, and he had the voice of lamentation.—And he was studding cadences with the jewels of his wording, and striking hearings with the reproofs of his admonition.—And now the medley of the crowds had surrounded him, as the halo surrounds the moon, or the shell the fruit.—So I crept towards him, that I might catch of his profitable sayings, and gather up of his gems.—And I heard him say, as he coursed along in his career, and the throat of his improvisation made utterance:—

O thou reckless in petulance, trailing the garment of vanity! O thou headstrong in follies, turning aside to idle tales!—How long wilt thou persevere in thine error, and eat sweetly of the pasture of thy wrong?—How far wilt thou be extreme in thy pride, and not abstain from thy wantonness?—Thou provokest by thy rebellion the Master of thy forelock; in the foulness of thy behaving thou goest boldly against the Knower of thy secret.—Thou hidest thyself from thy neighbour, but thou art in the sight of thy Watcher; thou concealest from thy slave, but no hidden thing is hidden from thy Ruler.—Thinkest thou that thy state will profit thee when thy departure draweth near? or that thy wealth will deliver thee when thy deeds destroy thee? or that thy repentance will suffice for thee when thy foot slippeth? or that thy kindred will lean to thee in the day that thy judgment place gathereth thee?—How is it thou hast not walked in the high-road of guidance, and hastened the treatment of thy disease, and blunted the edge of thine iniquity, and restrained thyself—thy chief enemy? Is not death thy doom? What then

is thy preparation? Is not grey hair thy warning? What then is thy excuse? And in the grave's niche thy sleeping place? What dost thou say? And to God thy going? and who shall be thy defender?—Oft hath the time awakened thee, but thou hast set thyself to slumber; and admonition hath drawn thee, but thou hast strained against it; and warnings have been manifest to thee, but thou hast made thyself blind; and truth hath been established to thee, but thou hast disputed it; and death hath bid thee remember, but thou hast sought to forget; and it hath been in thy power to impart of good, but thou hast not imparted.—Thou preferrest money which thou mayest hoard before piety which thou mayest keep in mind: thou choosest a castle thou mayest rear rather than bounty thou mayest confer.—Thou inclinest from the guide from whom thou mightest get guidance, to the pelf thou mayest gain as a gift; thou lettest the love of the raiment thou covetest overcome the recompence thou mightest earn.—The rubies of gifts cling to thy heart more than the seasons of prayer; and the heightening of dowries is preferred with thee to continuance in almsgivings.—The dishes of many meats are more desired of thee than the leaves of doctrines: the jesting of comrades is more cheerful to thee than the reading of the Koran.—Thou commandest to righteousness, but violatest its sanctuary: thou forbiddest from deceit, but refrainest not thyself: thou turnest men from oppression, and then thou drawest near to it; thou fearest mankind, but God is more worthy that thou shouldest fear him. Then he recited—

Woe to him who seeks the world, and turns to it his careering:
And recovers not from his greediness for it, and the excess of his love.

Oh, if he were wise, but a drop of what he seeks would content him.

Then he laid his dust, and let his spittle subside; and put his bottle on his arm, and his staff under his arm-pit.—And when the company gazed on his uprising, and saw that he equipped himself to move away from the midst—Each of them put his hand into his bosom, and filled for him a bucket from his stream:—And said, "Use this for thy spending, or divide it among thy friends."—And he received it with half-closed eyes, and turned away from them, giving thanks;—And began to take leave of whoever would escort him, that his road might be hidden from them; and to dismiss whoever would follow him, that his dwelling might be unknown.—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammân: Now I went after him, concealing from him my person; and followed on his track from where he could not see me;—Until he came to a cave, and slipped into it suddenly.—So I waited for him till he put off his sandals and washed his feet, and then I ran in upon him;—And found him sitting opposite an attendant, at some white bread and a roast kid, and over against them was a jar of date wine.—And I said to him, "Sirrah, was that thy story, and is this thy reality?"—But he puffed the puff of heat and went near to burst with rage; and ceased not to stare at me till I thought he would leap upon me.—But when his fire was allayed, and his flame hid itself, he recited:—

I don the black robe to seek my meal, and I fix my hook in the hardest prey:

And of my preaching I make a noose, and steal with it against the chaser and the chased.

Fortune has forced me to make way even to the lion of the thicket by the subtlety of my beguiling.

Yet do I not fear its change, nor does my loin quiver at it:
Nor does a covetous mind lead me to water at any well that will soil my honour.
Now if Fortune were just in its decree it would not empower the worthless with authority.

Then he said to me, "Come and eat; or, if thou wilt, rise and tell."—But I turned to his attendant, and said, "I conjure thee, by Him through whom harm is deprecated, that thou tell me who is this."—He said, "This is Abû Zayd, of Serûj, the Light of Foreigners, the Crown of the Learned."—Then I turned back to whence I came, and was extreme in wonder at what I saw.

THE SECOND ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF ḤOLWÂN."

In this Assembly the author displays more than his usual rhetorical subtlety, and while there is none more admired by those whose taste has been formed on Eastern models, there is none which appears more extravagant to the European student. Alliterations, verbal caprices, far-fetched expressions, and the puerile conceits which were usual among poets of the age, so abound, that we may almost imagine the author to be desirous of satirizing what he professes to imitate. The subject is as follows:—Ḥârith in his passion for the society of literary persons makes his way to Ḥolwân, a town in Irak, on the mountains east of Bagdad, and a resort of the higher classes from the heat of the capital. Here he meets with Abû Zayd, who is pursuing his calling of improvisatore and mendicant under various disguises, and enjoys for a long time his company and literary guidance. Abû Zayd, however, disappears, and Ḥârith returns to his native place, Basra, where after a time he again meets Abû Zayd in the public library, among a crowd of dilettanti who are discussing the beauties of the popular poets. The admiration of one is especially excited by a line in which the teeth of a lady are compared to pearls and hailstones, and the white petals of a flower; and Abû Zayd instantly produces a number of comparisons in the same style, which give him a high place in the esteem of those present, when they are assured that he is really the author of them.

They reward him, and the Assembly concludes by his reciting to Ḥârith, who had recognised him, some lines on the fickleness of fortune.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: Ever since my amulets were doffed and my turbans were donned, I was eager to visit learning's seat and to jade to it the camels of seeking.—That through it I might cleave to what would be my ornament among men, my rain-cloud in thirst.—And through the excess of my longing to kindle at it, and my desire to robe myself in its raiment,—I discussed with every one, great and small, and sought my draught both of the rain-flood and the dew, and solaced myself with hope and desire.—Now when I descended at Ḥolwân, and had already tried the brethren, and tested their values, and proved what was worthless or fine;—I found there Abû Zayd of Serûj, shifting among the varieties of pedigree, beating about in various courses of gain-getting;—For at one time he claimed to be of the race of Sâsân, and at another he made himself kin to the princes of Ghassân; and now he sallied forth in the vesture of poets; and anon he put on the pride of nobles.—And yet with all this diversifying of his condition, and this display of contradiction,—He is adorned with grace and information, and courtesy and knowledge, and astonishing eloquence, and obedient improvisation, and excelling accomplishments, and a foot that mounts the hills of the sciences.—Now, through his goodly attainments he is associated with in spite of his faults; and through the largeness of his information there is a fondness for the sight of him; and through the blandishment of his fair-speaking men are loath to oppose him; and through the sweetness of his address he is helped to his

desire.—Then I clung to his skirts for the sake of his peculiar accomplishments, and valued highly his affection by reason of his precious qualities.

With him I wiped away my cares, and beheld my fortune displayed to me, open of face, gleaming with light.

I looked upon his nearness to me as kinship, his abiding as wealth, his aspect as a full draught, his life as rain.

Thus we remained a long season; he produced for me daily some pleasantness, and drove some doubt from my heart,—Until the hand of want mixed for him the cup of parting, and the lack of a meal urged him to abandon Irak;—And the failures of supply cast him into desert regions, and the waving of the banner of distress ranged him in the line of travellers;—And he sharpened for departure the edge of determination, and journeyed away, drawing my heart with his leading cord.

After he was gone none pleased me who kept by me, none filled me with affection by urging me to intimacy.

Since he strayed away none has appeared to me his like in excellence; no friend has gotten the equal of his qualities.

So he was hidden from me a season: I knew not his lair; I found none to tell of him;—But when I had returned from my wandering to the place where my branch had sprouted,—I was once present in the town library, which is the council-hall of scholars, the meeting place of residents and strangers:—Then there entered one with a thick beard and a squalid aspect,—And he saluted those who sat, and took seat in the last rows of the people.—Then began he to produce what was in his wallet, and to astonish those present by the sagacity of his judgment.—And he said to the man who was next him, "What is the book into which thou lookest?"—He said, "The poems of Abû 'Obâdeh; him of whose ex-

cellence men bear witness."—He said, "In what thou hast seen hast thou hit on any fine thing which thou admirest?"—He said, "Yes; the line

As though she smiled from strung pearls or hailstones, or camomile flowers.

For it is original in the use of similitude which it contains."—He said to him, "Here is a wonder! here is a lack of taste,—Sir, thou hast taken for fat what is only swollen, thou hast blown on that which is no fuel:—Where art thou in comparison with the rare verse which unites the similitudes of the teeth?

My life a ransom for those teeth whose beauty charms, and which a purity adorns sufficing thee for all other.

She parts her lips from fresh pearls, and from hail-stones, and from camomile flowers, and from the palm shoot, and from bubbles.

Then each one approved the couplet and admired it, and bade him repeat it and dictate it.—And he was asked, "Whose is this verse, and is its author living or dead?"—He said, "By Allah, Right is most worthy to be followed, and truth is most fitting to be listened to:—Know, friends, that it is his who talks with you today."—Said Al Ḥarith: Now it was as though the company doubted of his fathering, and were unwilling to give credit to his claim.—And he perceived what had fallen into their thoughts, and was aware of their inward unbelief;—And was afraid that blame might chance to him, or ill-fame reach him;—So he quoted from the Koran, "Some suspicions are a sin."—Then he said, "O ye reciters of verse, physicians of sickly phrase!—Truly the purity of the gem is shown by the testing, and the hand of truth rends the cloak of doubt.—Now it was said aforetime that by trial is a man honoured or con-

temned.—So come! I now expose my hidden store to the proving, I offer my saddle-bag for comparison."—Then hastened one who was there and said: "I know a verse such that there is no weaving on its beam, such that no genius can supply one after its image.—Now, if thou wish to draw our hearts to thee, compose after this style:—

She rained pearls from the daffodil, and watered the rose, and bit upon the 'unnâb with hailstone.

And it was but the glance of an eye, or less, before he recited rarely:—

I asked her when she met me to put off her crimson veil, and to endow my hearing with the sweetest of tidings:
And she removed the ruddy light which covered the brightness of her moon, and she dropped pearls from a perfumed ring.

Then all present were astonished at his readiness, and acknowledged his honesty.—And when he perceived that they approved his diction, and were hastening into the path of honouring him,—He looked down the twinkling of an eye; then he said, "Here are two other verses for you;" and recited:—

She came on the day when departure afflicted, in black robes, biting her fingers like one regretful, confounded:
And night lowered on her morn, and a branch supported them both, and she bit into crystal with pearls.

Then did the company set high his value, and deem that his steady rain was a plenteous one;—And they made pleasant their converse with him, and gave him goodly clothing.—Said the teller of this story: Now when I saw the blazing of his firebrand, and the gleam of his unveiled brightness, I fixed a long look to guess at him, and made my eye to stray over his countenance.—And lo! he was our Shaykh of Serûj; but now his

dark night was moon-lit.—Then I congratulated myself on his coming thither, and hastened to kiss his hand:—And said to him, "What has changed thy appearance, so that I could not recognise thee? what has made thy beard gray, so that I knew not thy countenance?"—And he indited and said:—

The stroke of calamities makes us hoary, and fortune to men is a changer.

If it yields to-day to any, to-morrow it overcomes him.

Trust not the gleam of its lightning, for it is a deceitful gleam.

But be patient if it hounds calamities against thee, and drives them on.

For there is no disgrace on the pure gold when it is turned about in the fire.

Then he rose and departed from his place, and carried away our hearts with him.

THE THIRD ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF ḲAYLAH."

Ḥârith is in a circle of scholars, when a lame man makes his appearance, and after saluting them describes his former affluence and present penury in a very poetical and figurative style. Ḥârith perceiving his genius, and pitying his distress, offers him a *denar*, on condition that he will improvise some lines in praise of it. This the lame man at once does, and on Ḥârith offering him another *denar* on condition of his blaming it, he recites another composition in dispraise of money. Ḥârith then recognizes in the lame man Abû Zayd, and rebukes him for his imposture. Abû Zayd defends himself in some new verses. The opening address of Abû Zayd is in imitation of a style said to be common among the Arabs of the desert.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was set with some comrades in a company wherein he that made appeal was never bootless, and the rubbing of the fire-shafts never failed, and the flame of contention never

blazed.—And while we were catching from each other the cues of recitations, and betaking ourselves to novelties of anecdote,—Behold there stood by us one on whom was a worn garment, and in whose walk was a limp.—And he said, O ye best of treasures, joys of your kindred: Health to you this morning; may ye enjoy your morning draught.—Look on one who was erewhile master of guest-room and largess, wealth and bounty, land and villages, dishes and feasting.—But the frowning of calamities ceased not from him, and the warrings of sorrows, and the fire-flakes of the malice of the envious, and the succession of dark befallings,—Until the court was empty, and the yard was bare, and the fountain sank, and the dwelling was desolate, and the hall was void, and the chamber stone-strewed.—And fortune shifted so that the household wailed; and the stalls were vacant, so that the rival had compassion; and the cattle and the goods they perished, so that the envious and malignant pitied.—And to such a pass did we come, through assailing fortune and prostrating need,—That we were shod with soreness, and fed on choking, and filled our bellies with ache, and wrapped our entrails upon hunger, and anointed our eyes with watching, and made pits our home, and deemed thorns a smooth bed, and came to forget our saddles, and thought destroying death to be sweet, and the ordained day to be tardy.—And now is there any one generous to heal, bountiful to bestow?—For by Him who made me to spring from Ḳaylah, surely I am now a brother of penury, I have not a nights' victual.

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now I pitied his distresses, and inclined to the eliciting of his rhymes.—

So I drew forth for him a denar, and said to him, to prove him, "If thou praise it in verse it is thine, full surely."—And he betook himself to recite on the spot, borrowing nothing:—

How noble is that yellow one, whose yellowness is pure,
Which traverses the regions, and whose journeying is afar.
Told abroad are its fame and repute:
Its lines are set as the secret sign of wealth;
Its march is coupled with the success of endeavours;
Its bright look is loved by mankind;
As though its ore had been molten of their hearts.
By its aid whoever has gotten it in his purse assails boldly,
Though kindred be perished, or tardy to help.
Oh charming are its purity and brightness;
Charming are its sufficiency and help.
How many a ruler is there whose rule has been perfected by it!
How many a sumptuous one is there whose grief, but for it, would be endless!
How many a host of cares has one charge of it put to flight!
How many a full moon has a sum of it brought down!
How many a one burning with rage, whose coal is flaming,
Has it been secretly whispered to, and then his anger has softened.
How many a prisoner, whom his kin had yielded,
Has it delivered, so that his gladness has been unmingled,
Now by the Truth of the Lord whose creation brought it forth,
Were it not for His fear, I should say its power is supreme.

Then he stretched forth his hand after his recitation, and said, "The honourable man performs what he promises, and the rain-cloud pours if it has thundered."—So I threw him the denar, and said, "Take it; no grudging goes with it."—And he put it in his mouth and said, "God bless it."—Then he girt up his skirts for departure, after that he had paid his thanks.—But there arose in me, through his pleasantry, a giddiness of desire which made me ready to incur indebtedness.—So I bared another denar, and said, "Does it suit thee to

blame this, and then gather it?"—And he recited impromptu, and sang with speed:—

Ruin on it for a deceiver and insincere,
The yellow one with two faces like a hypocrite!
It shows forth with two qualities to the eye of him that looks on it,
The adornment of the loved one, the colour of the lover.
Affection for it, think they who judge truly,
Tempts men to commit that which shall anger their Maker.
But for it no thief's right hand were cut off;
Nor would tyranny be displayed by the impious;
Nor would the niggard shrink from the night-farer;
Nor would the delayed claimant mourn the delay of him that withholds;
Nor would men call to God from the envious who casts at them.
Moreover, the worst quality that it possesses
Is that it helps thee not in straits,
Save by fleeing from thee like a runaway slave.
Well done he who casts it away from a hill-top,
And who, when it whispers to him with the whispering of a lover,
Says to it in the words of the truth-speaking, the veracious,
"I have no mind for intimacy with thee,—begone!"

Then said I to him, "How abundant is thy shower!" He said, "Agreement binds strongest."—So I tossed him the second denar and said, "Consecrate them both with the Twice-read Chapter."—He cast it into his mouth and joined it with its twin,—And turned away blessing his morning's walk, praising the assembly and its bounty.—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now my heart whispered me that he was Abû Zayd, and that his going lame was for a trick;—So I called him back and said to him, "Thou art recognised by thy eloquence, so straighten thy walk."—He said, "If thou be the son of Hammâm, be thou greeted with honour and live long among the honourable."—I said, "I am Ḥârith; but what is thy condition amid all thy fortunes."—He said, "I change between two conditions, distress and ease; and I veer

with two winds, the tempest and the breeze."—I said, "And how hast thou pretended lameness? the like of thee plays not buffoon."—Then his cheerfulness, which had shone forth, waned; but he recited as he moved away:—

I have feigned to be lame, not from love of lameness, but that I may knock at the gate of relief.

For my cord is thrown on my neck, and I go as one who ranges freely.

Now if men blame me I say, "Excuse me: sure there is no guilt on the lame."

THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF DAMIETTA."

Ḥârith is journeying in a caravan to Damietta, and during one of the night-halts he hears two men conversing on duty towards a neighbour. The younger being asked for his opinion replies in a spirit of charity and generosity, upon which the other rebukes him, and sets forth the fitting conduct of a man to his neighbour in accordance with the teachings of selfishness and worldly wisdom. These addresses, especially that of the elder man, are expressed in a highly rhetorical diction, which captivates the literary Ḥârith, and the next morning he looks for them, and discovers them to be Abû Zayd and his son. He invites them to his own quarters, introduces them to his friends, and procures for them valuable presents. Abû Zayd then asks permission to go to a neighbouring village and take a bath, promising to return speedily. They consent, and he goes off with his son. After waiting the greater part of the day they find that he has deceived them, and prepare to continue their journey; Ḥârith, when making ready his camel, finds some lines written on the saddle, which allude to a precept in the Koran in favour of separating after a meal. The plays on words in this Assembly are exceedingly ingenious and elaborate, and the opening description has much poetical beauty.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I journeyed to Damietta in a year of much coming and going,—And in

those days was I glanced after for my affluence, desired in friendship:—I trained the bordered robes of wealth and looked upon the features of joy.—And I was travelling with companions who had broken the staff of dissension, who were suckled on the milk-flows of concord,—So that they showed like the teeth of a comb in uniformity, and like one soul in agreement of desires;—But we coursed on withal apace, and not one of us but had saddled a fleet she-camel;—And if we alighted at a station or went aside to a spring, we snatched the halt and lengthened not the staying.

Now it happened that we were urging our camels on a night youthful in prime, raven-locked of complexion;—And we journeyed until the night-season had put off its prime, and the morning had wiped away the dye of the dark;—But when we wearied of the march and inclined to drowsiness, we came upon a ground with dew-moistened hillocks, and a faint east breeze:—And we chose it as a resting-place for the white camels, an abode for the night-halt.—Now when the caravan had descended there, and the groan and the roar of the beasts were still,—I heard a loud-voiced man say to his talk-fellow in the camp, "What is the rule of thy conduct with thy people and neighbours?"—The other answered, I am duteous to my neighbour though he wrong me; and give my fellowship even to the violent; and bear with a partner though he disorder my affairs; and love my friend even though he drench me with a tepid draught; and prefer my well-wisher above my brother; and fulfil to my comrade even though he requite me not with a tenth; and think little of much if it be for my guest; and whelm my companion with my kindness;

and put my talk-fellow in the place of my prince; and hold my intimate to be as my chief; and commit my gifts to my acquaintance; and confer my comforts on my associate; and soften my speech to him that hates me; and continue to ask after him that disregards me; and am pleased with but the crumbs of my due; and am content with but the least portion of my reward; and complain not of wrong even when I am wronged; and revenge not, even though a viper sting me.

Then said his companion to him, Alas! my boy, only he who clings should be clung to; only he who is valuable should be prized.—As for me I give only to him who will requite; I distinguish not the insolent by my regard; nor will I be of pure affection to one who refuses me fair-dealing; nor treat as a brother one who would undo my tethering rope; nor aid one who would baulk my hopes; nor care for one who would cut my cords; nor be courteous to him who ignores my value; nor give my leading rope to one who breaks my covenant; nor be free of my love to my adversaries; nor lay aside my menace to the hostile; nor plant my benefits on the land of my enemies; nor be willing to impart to him who rejoices at my ills; nor show my regard to him who will exult at my death; nor favour with my gifts any but my friends; nor call to the curing of my sickness any but those who love me; nor confer my friendship on him who will not stop my breach; nor make my purpose sincere to him who wishes my decease; nor be earnest in prayer for him who will not fill my wallet; nor pour out my praise on him who empties my jar.—For who has adjudged that I should be lavish and thou shouldest hoard, that I should be soft and thou rough, that

I should melt and thou freeze, that I should blaze and thou smoulder?—No, by Allah, but let us balance in speech as coin, and match in deed as sandals.—That each to each we may be safe from fraud and free from hatred.—For else, why should I give thee full water and thou stint me? why should I bear with thee and thou contemn me? why should I gain for thee and thou wound me? why should I advance to thee and thou repel me? For how should fair-dealing be attracted by injury? how can the sun rise clear with cloud?—And when did love follow docilely after wrong? and what man of honour consents to a state of abasement?—For excellently said thy father:—

Whoso attaches his affection to me, I repay him as one who builds on his foundation:

And I mete to a friend as he metes to me, according to the fullness of his meting or its defect.

I make him not a loser! for the worst of men is he whose to-day falls short of his yesterday.

Whoever seeks fruit of me gets only the fruit of his own planting.

I seek not to defraud, but I will not come off with the bargain of one who is weak in his reason.

I hold not truth binding on me towards a man who holds it not binding on himself.

There may be some one insincere in love who fancies that I am true in my friendship for him, while he is false;

And knows not in his ignorance that I pay my creditor his debt after its kind.

Sunder, with the sundering of hate, from one who would make thee a fool, and hold him as one entombed in his grave.

And towards him in whose intercourse there is aught doubtful put on the garb of one who shrinks from his intimacy.

And hope not for affection from any who sees that thou art in want of his money.

Said Al Ḥarith, son of Hammâm: Now, when I had gathered what passed between them, I longed to know them in person.—And when the sun shone forth, and

robed the sky with light, I went forth before the camels had risen, and with an earliness beyond the earliness of the crow,—And began to follow the direction of that night-voice, and to examine the faces with a searching glance:—Until I caught sight of Abû Zayd and his son talking together, and upon them were two worn mantles.—Then I knew that they were my two talkers of the night, the authors of my recitation.—So I approached them as one enamoured of their refinement, pitying their shabbiness;—And offered them a removal to my lodging, and the disposal of my much and my little;—And began to tell abroad their worth among the travellers, and to shake for them the fruited branches;—Until they were whelmed with gifts, and taken as friends.—Now we were in a night-camp, whence we could discern the build of the villages, and spy the fires of hospitality.—And when Abû Zayd saw that his purse was full, and his distress removed, he said to me, "Truly my body is dirty, and my filth has caked:—Wilt thou permit me to go to a village, and bathe, and fulfil this urgent need?"—I said, "If thou wilt; but quick! return!"—He said, "Thou shalt find me appear again to thee, quicker than the glancing of thine eye."—Then he coursed away, as courses the good steed in the training-ground, and said to his son, "Haste! haste!"—And we imagined not that he was deceiving, or seeking to escape.—So we stayed and watched for him as men watch for the new moons of feasts, and made search for him by spies and scouts.—Until the sunlight was weak with age, and the wasted bank of the day had nigh crumbled in.—Then, when the term of waiting had been prolonged, and the sun showed in faded garb—

I said to my companions, "We have gone to the extreme in delay, and have been long in the setting forth;—So that we have lost time, and it is plain that the man was lying.—Now, therefore, prepare for the journey, and turn not aside to the greenness of dung heaps."—Then I rose to equip my camel and lade for the departure; and found that Abû Zayd had written on the pack saddle:—

Oh thou, who wast to me an arm and a helper, above all mankind!

Reckon not that I have left thee through impatience or ingratitude:

For since I was born I have been of those who "when they have eaten separate."

Said Al Ḥarith: "Then I made the company read the words of the Koran that were on the pack saddle, so that he who had blamed him might excuse him.—And they admired his witticism, but commended themselves from his mischief.—Then we set forth, nor could we learn whose company he had gotten in our place.

THE FIFTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF KUFA."

The following Assembly, remarkable for the poetical beauty of its language, and the delicacy of its versification, describes an adventure in which Abû Zayd obtains a sum of money from a company of generous scholars. Ḥârith is engaged with some friends in a night conversation at Kufa, one of the chief seats of Arabian learning, when a stranger knocks at the door, and addresses the inmates in verses describing his want and weariness, his excellent disposition, and his gratitude for the favours he may receive. Struck with his poetical powers the company admit him, and give him a supper. The lamp being brought, Ḥârith discovers that the guest is Abû Zayd, and informs the company of his merits. They then ask him for a story, and he relates that he had that evening met with a long

lost son, whom he would be glad to take charge of, did not his poverty hinder him. As he had taken care to mention in the narrative that he was of the royal race of Ghassân, the company are moved by his misfortunes, and at once raise a large sum of money to enable him to support his boy. Abû Zayd delights them with his conversation, but as soon as daylight appears he calls away Ḥârith, to assist him in cashing the cheques or orders which he had received. The simple Ḥârith, who had been delighted with the verses which the father had put into the mouth of his son, desires to see so eloquent a youth; upon which Abû Zayd laughs heartily, tells his friend, in some exquisite verses, that such a desire is the following of a mirage, that he, Abû Zayd, had neither wife nor son, and that the story was only a trick to obtain money. He then departs, leaving Ḥârith mortified at the adventure.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was conversing at Kufa, in a night whose complexion was of a two-fold hue, whose moon was as an amulet of silver—With companions who had been nourished on the milk of eloquence, who might draw the train of oblivion over Saḥbân.—Each was a man to remember from, and not to guard against; each was one whom his friend would incline to, and not avoid.—And the night talk fascinated us until the moon had set, and the watching overcame us.—Now when night's unmingled dark had spread its awning, and there was nought but nodding among us—We heard from the gate the faint sound of a wayfarer, rousing the dogs; then followed the knock of one bidding to open.—We said, "Who is it that comes in the dark night?" Then the traveller answered:—

O people of the mansion, be ye guarded from ill!
Meet not harm as long as ye live!
Lo! the night which glooms has driven
To your abode one dishevelled, dust laden,
A brother of journeying, that has been lengthened, extended,
Till he has become bent and yellow
Like the new moon of the horizon when it smiles.

And now he approaches your court-yard, begging boldly,
And repairs to you before all people else,
To seek from you food and a lodging.
Ye have in him a guest contented, ingenuous,
One pleased with all, whether sweet or bitter,
One who will withdraw from you, publishing your bounty.

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now when we were caught by the sweetness of his utterance, and knew what was behind his lightning,—We hastened to open the gate, and met him with welcome;—And said to the boy "Quick, quick! bring what is ready!"—Then said our guest, "Now, by Him who has set me down at your abode, I will not roll my tongue over your food,—Unless ye pledge me that ye will not make me a burden, that ye will not, for my sake, task yourselves with a meal.—For sometimes a morsel aches the eater, and forbids him his repasts.—And the worst of guests is he who imposes trouble and annoys his host,—And especially with a harm that affects the body and tends to sickness.—For, by that proverb, which is widely current, 'The best suppers are those that are clearly seen.'—Is only meant that supper-time should be hastened, and eating by night, which dims the sight, avoided.—Unless, by Allah, the fire of hunger kindle and stand in the way of sleep." —Said Al Ḥârith: Now it was as though he had got sight of our desire, and so had shot with the bow of our conviction.—Accordingly we gratified him by agreeing to the condition, and commended him for his easy temper.—And when the boy brought what was to be had, and lighted the candle in the midst of us, I looked close at him, and lo! it was Abû Zayd.—So I said to my company, "Joy to you of the guest who has come! Nay, but the spoil is lightly won!—For if the moon of Sirius

has gone down, truly the moon of poetry has risen:—Or if the full moon of the Lion has waned, the full moon of eloquence shines forth."—Then ran through them the wine-glow of joy, and sleep flew away from their eye-corners.—And they refused the rest which they had purposed, and returned to the spreading out of pleasantry, after they had folded it.—But Abû Zayd kept intent upon plying his hands; however, when what was before him might be removed—I said to him, "Present us with one of the rare stories from thy night talkings, or some wonder from among the wonders of thy journeys."—He said, "Of wonders I have met with such as no seers have seen, no tellers have told.—But among the most wondrous was that which I beheld to-night, a little before my visit to you and my coming to your gate."—Then we bade him tell us of this new thing which he had seen in the field of his night-faring.—He said, Truly the hurlings of exile have thrown me to this land:—And I was in hunger and distress, with a scrip like the heart of the mother of Moses.—Now, as soon as the dark had settled, I arose, in spite of all my footsoreness, to seek a host or to gain a loaf.—Then the driver hunger, and Fate, which is bye-named the Father of Wonders, urged me on, till I stood at the door of a house, and spoke, improvising:—

Hail people of this dwelling,
May ye live in the ease of a plenteous life!
What have ye for a son of the road, one crushed to the sand,
Worn with journeys, stumbling in the night-dark night,
Aching in entrails, which inclose nought but hunger?
For two days he has not tasted the savour of a meal:
In your land there is no refuge for him.
And already the van of the drooping darkness has gloomed;
And through bewilderment he is in restlessness.

Now in this abode is there any one, sweet of spring,
Who will say to me, "Throw away thy staff and enter:
Rejoice in a cheerful welcome and a ready meal?"

Then came forth to me a lad in a tunic, and answered:—

Now by the sanctity of the Shaykh who ordained hospitality,
And founded the House of Pilgrimage in the Mother of cities,
We have nought for the night-farer when he visits us
But conversation and a lodging in our hall.
For how should he entertain whom hinders from sleepfulness
Hunger which peels his bones when it assails him?
Now what thinkest thou of my tale? what thinkest thou?

I said, "What shall I do with an empty house, and a host the ally of penury?—But tell me, youth, what is thy name, for thy understanding has charmed me."—He said, "My name is Zayd, and my birth-place Fayd: and I came to this city yesterday with my mother's kindred of the Benû 'Abs."—I said to him, "Show me further, so mayest thou live and be raised when thou fallest!"—He said, "My mother Barrah told me (and she is like her name, 'pious') that she married in the year of the foray on Mâwân a man of the nobles of Serûj and Ghassân;—But when he was aware of her pregnancy (for he was a crafty bird, it is said) he made off from her by stealth, and away he has stayed,—Nor is it known whether he is alive and to be looked for, or whether he has been laid in the lonely tomb."—Said Abû Zayd, "Now I knew by sure signs that he was my child; but the emptiness of my hand turned me from making known to him,—So I parted from him with heart crushed and tears unsealed.—And now, ye men of understanding, have ye heard aught more wondrous than this wonder?"—We said, "No, by Him who has knowledge of the Book."—He said, "Record it among the

wonders of chance; bid it abide for ever in the hearts of scrolls; for nothing like it has been told abroad in the world."—Then we bade bring the ink-flask, and its snake-like reeds, and we wrote the story elegantly as he worded it;—After which we sought to draw from him his wish about receiving his boy.—He said, "If my purse were heavy, then to take charge of my son would be light."—We said, "If a *niṣâb* of money would suffice thee, we will collect it for thee at once."—He said, "And how should a *niṣâb* not content me? would any but a madman despise such a sum?"—Said the narrator, Then each of us undertook a share of it, and wrote for him an order for it.—Whereupon he gave thanks for the kindness, and exhausted the plenteousness of praise; until we thought his speech long, or our merit little.—And then he spread out such a bright mantle of talk as might shame the stuffs of Yemen,—Until the dawn appeared and the light-bearing morn went forth.—So we spent a night of which the mixed hues had departed, until its hind-locks grew gray in the dawn;—And whose lucky stars were sovereign until its branch budded into light.—But when the limb of the sun peeped forth, he leaped up as leaps the gazelle,—And said, "Rise up, that we may take hold on the gifts and draw payment of the cheques:—For the clefts of my heart are widening through yearning after my child."—So I went with him, hand in hand, to make easy his success.—But as soon as he had secured the coin in his purse the marks of his joy flashed forth,—And he said, "Be thou rewarded for the steps of thy feet! be God my substitute towards thee!"—I said, "I wish to follow thee that I may behold thy noble child, and speak with him that he

may answer eloquently."—Then looked he at me as looks the deceiver on the deceived, and laughed till his eyeballs gushed with tears; and he recited:—

O thou who didst fancy the mirage to be water when I quoted to thee what I quoted!

I thought not that my guile would be hidden, or that it would be doubtful what I meant.

By Allah, I have no Barrah for a spouse; I have no son from whom to take a bye-name.

Nothing is mine but divers kinds of magic, in which I am original and copy no one:

They are such as Al Aṣma'î tells not of in what he has told; such as Al Komayt never wove.

These I use when I will to reach whatever my hand would pluck:

And were I to abandon them, changed would be my state, nor should I gain what I now gain.

So allow my excuse; nay, pardon me, if I have done wrong or crime.

Then he took leave of me and passed away, and set coals of the *ghaḍa* in my breast.

THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF MERÂGHAH," OR "THE DIVERSIFIED."

This Assembly is the first of a remarkable series of compositions which, though they may be set down by Europeans as merely examples of laborious trifling, are highly esteemed by the Orientals as works of ingenuity and scholarship, and have found in every succeeding age numerous imitators. The incident is that Ḥârith, being once on a visit to Merâghah, in Azerbijan, the north-west province of the present Persian monarchy, found a number of literary men lamenting the decline of learning, and depreciating all contemporary authors in comparison with their predecessors. Sitting in a humble place in the outskirts of the company was an elderly man, who showed by his glances and scornful gestures that he did not value highly the opinions of these critics. When they paused in their fault-finding he took up the conversation, and declared that one person, at least, of the present age was capable of rivalling

any who had gone before in scholarship and the arts of composition. He is asked who is this genius, and answers that it is himself. The company are sceptical, but as the stranger persists in asserting his great ability, they determine to test him, and one of them proposes to him a most difficult task. He tells the company that he is a professional writer attached to the Governor, who though a man of generosity, had declared that he would help him no further, till he had composed an address in which the alternate words should consist entirely of pointed and unpointed letters; that is, that the first, third, fifth words, and so forth, should consist of letters without a point, while the second, fourth, sixth, and so forth, should have only pointed letters. He adds that he had been striving a whole year to produce such a composition, or to find some one who could produce it. The stranger, on hearing this, accepts the task with alacrity, and instantly dictates an address in praise of the Governor, fulfilling the conditions that had been imposed. The company are delighted, and inquire his family and abode: he answers in some plaintive verses that he is of the tribe of Ghassân, and the city of Serûj. His fame having reached the Governor, he is offered the place of a public writer, but declines it. Ḥârith, who had discovered that he was Abû Zayd, asks him the reason of this unwillingness to accept office. Abû Zayd again replies in verse, and tells his friend that a life of freedom and poverty is better than dependence on the great.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was present in the Court of Supervision at Merâghah when the talk ran of eloquence.—Then agreed all who were there of the knights of the pen, and the lords of genius;—That there remained no one who could select his diction, or use himself freely in it as he willed:—And that since the men of old were gone, there was none now left who could originate a brilliant method, or open a virgin style.—And that even one marvellous among the writers of this age, and holding in his grasp the cords of eloquence, is but a dependent on the ancients, even though he possess the fluency of Saḥbân Wâ'il.—Now there was in the assembly an elderly man, sitting on the outskirts, in

the places of the attendants:—And as often as the company overran in their career, and scattered fruit, good and bad, from their store,—The side-glance of his eye and the up-turning of his nose showed that he was one silent to spring, one crouching who would extend his stride:—That he was a twanger of the bow who shapes his arrows, one who sits in wait desiring the conflict.—But when the quivers were empty, and quiet returned; when the storms had fallen, and the disputer was stayed,—He turned to the company and said, Ye have uttered a grievous thing, ye have wandered much from the way:—For ye have magnified mouldering bones, ye have been excessive in your leaning to those who are gone; ye have contemned your generation, among whom ye were born, and with whom your friendships are established.—Have ye forgotten, ye skilful in testing, ye sages of loosing and binding,—How much new springs have given forth; how the colt has surpassed the full-grown steed;—In refined expressions, and delightful metaphors, and ornate addresses, and admired cadences?—And, if any one here will look diligently, is there in the ancients aught but ideas whose paths are worn, whose ranges are restricted; which have been handed down from them through the priority of their birth, not from any superiority in him who draws first at the well over him who comes after?—Now truly know I one who when he composes colours richly; and when he expresses, embellishes; and when he is lengthy, finds golden thoughts; and when he is brief, baffles his imitator; and when he improvises, astonishes; and when he creates, cuts the envious.

Then said to him the President of the Court, the Eye

of those Eyes: "Who is it that strikes on this rock, that is the hero of these qualities?"—He said, "It is the adversary of this thy skirmish, the partner of thy disputation: Now, if thou wilt, rein a good steed, call forth one who will answer, so shalt thou see a wonder."—He said to him, "Stranger, the chough in our land is not taken for an eagle, and with us it is easy to discern between silver and shingle.—Rare is he who exposes himself to the conflict, and then escapes the mortal hurt; or who stirs up the dust of trial, and then catches not the mote of contempt.—So offer not thy honour to shame, turn not from the counsel of the counsellor."—He answered, "Each man knows best the mark of his arrow, and be sure the night shall disclose its morn."—

Then whispered the company as to how his well should be fathomed, and his proving undertaken.—Said one of them, "Leave him to my share, that I may pelt him with the stone of my story; for it is the tightest of knots, the touch-stone of testing."—Then they invested him with the command in this business as the Rebels invested Abû Na'âmeh.—Whereupon he turned to the elder and said, Know that I am attached to this Governor and maintain my condition by ornamental eloquence.—Now, in my country, I could rely for the straightening of my crookedness on the sufficiency of my means, coupled with the smallness of my family.—But when my back was weighted, and my thin rain failed, I repaired to him from my home with hope, and besought him to restore my comeliness and my competence.—And he looked pleasantly on my coming, and was gracious, and served me morn and even.—But when I sought permission from him to depart to my abode, on the shoulder

of cheerfulness,—He said, "I have determined that I will not provide thee with supplies, I will bring together for thee no scattered means;—Unless, before thy departure, thou compose an address, setting in it an exposition of thy state;—Such, that the letters of one of every two words shall all have dots, while the letters of the other shall not be pointed at all."—And now have I waited for my eloquence a twelvemonth, but it has returned me not a word; and I have roused my wit for a year, but only my sluggishness has increased.—And I have sought aid among the gathering of the scribes, but each of them has frowned and drawn back.—Now, if thou hast disclosed thy character with accuracy, *Come with a sign if thou be of the truthful.*

Then answered the elder, "Thou hast put a good steed to the pace; thou hast sought water at a full stream; thou hast given the bow to him who fashioned it; thou hast lodged in the house him who built it."—And he thought a while till he had let his flow of wit collect, his milch camel fill her udder:—And then he said: Wool thy ink-flask, and take thy implements and write:—

Generosity (may God establish the host of thy successes), adorns; but meanness (may fortune cast down the eye-lid of thy enviers), dishonours; the noble rewards, but the base disappoints; the princely entertains, but the niggard frights away; the liberal nourishes, but the churl pains; giving relieves, but deferring torments; blessing protects, and praise purifies; the honourable repays, for repudiation abases; the rejection of him who should be respected is error; a denial to the sons of hope is outrage; and none is miserly but the fool, and none is

foolish but the miser; and none hoards but the wretched; for the pious clenches not his palms.

But thy promise ceases not to fulfil; thy sentiments cease not to relieve; nor thy clemency to indulge; nor thy new moon to illumine; nor thy bounty to enrich; nor thy enemies to praise thee; nor thy blade to destroy; nor thy princeship to build up; nor thy suitor to gain; nor thy praiser to win; nor thy kindness to succour; nor thy heaven to rain; nor thy milk-flow to abound; nor thy refusal to be rare.—Now he who hopes in thee is an old man like a shadow, one to whom nothing remains.—He seeks thee with a persuasion whose eagerness leaps onward; he praises thee in choice phrases, which merit their dowries.—His demand is a light one, his claims are clear; his praise is striven for, his blame is shunned.—And behind him is a household whom misery has touched, whom wrong has stripped, whom squalor involves.—And he is ever in tears that come at call, and trouble that melts him, and care that is as a guest, and growing sadness:—On account of hope that has disappointed him, and loss that has made him hoary, and the enemy that has fixed tooth in him, and the quiet that is gone.—And yet his love has not swerved, that there should be anger at him; nor is his wood rotten, that he should be lopped away; nor has his breast spit foulness that he should be shaken off; nor has his intercourse been froward that he should be hated.—Now thy honour admits not the rejection of his claim, so whiten his hope by the lightening of his distress: then will he publish thy praise throughout the world.—So mayest thou live to avert misfortune, and to bestow wealth; to heal grief and to care for the aged:—Attended by affluence and

fresh joyousness; as long as the hall of the rich is visited, or the delusion of the selfish is feared. And so Peace.

Now when he had ceased from the dictation of his address, and showed forth his prowess in the strife of eloquence—The company gratified him both by word and deed, and made large to him their courtesy and their bounty.—Then was he asked from what tribe was his origin, and in what valley was his lair; and he answered:

Ghassân is my noble kindred, and Serûj my ancient land:
There my home was like the sun in splendour and mighty rank;
And my dwelling was as Paradise in sweetness and pleasantness and worth.
Oh, excellent were the life I led there and the plenteous delights,
In the day that I drew my broidered robe in its meadow, sharp of purpose.
I walked proudly in the mantle of youth and looked upon goodly pleasures;
Fearing not the visitations of time and its evil haps.
Now if grief could kill, surely I should perish from my abiding griefs;
Or if past life could be redeemed my good heart's blood should redeem it.
For death is better for a man than to live the life of a beast,
When the ring of subjection leads him to mighty trouble and outrage,
And he sees lions whom the paws of assailing hyænas seize.
But the fault is in the time: but for its ill luck character would not miss its place:
If the time were upright, then would the conditions of men be upright in it.

After this his story reached the Governor, who filled his mouth with pearls,—And bade him join himself to his followers, and preside over his court of public writing.—But the gifts sufficed him, and unwillingness restrained him from office.—Said the narrator: Now I had recognized the wood of his tree before the ripening of his fruit:

—And I had nigh roused the people to the loftiness of his worth before that his full moon shone forth.—But he hinted to me by a twinkle of his eyelid that I should not bare his sword from its sheath.—And when he was going forth, full of purse, and parting from us, having gotten victory,—I escorted him, performing the duty of respect, and chiding him for his refusal of office.—But he turned away with a smile and recited with a chant:

Sure to traverse the lands in poverty is dearer to me than rank:
For in rulers there is caprice and fault-finding, Oh what fault-finding!
There is none of them who completes his good work, or who builds up where has laid foundation.
So let not the glare of the mirage beguile thee; undertake not that which is doubtful:
For how many a dreamer has his dream made joyful; but fear has come upon him when he waked.

THE SEVENTH ASSEMBLY CALLED "OF BARḲA'ÎD."

This Assembly is well known to students, having been published with a translation and valuable notes by De Sacy in his *Chrestomathie Arabe*. Ḥârith is at Barḳa'îd, a place which is described as the chief town of the Diyâr Rabî'ah, at the distance of seventeen parasangs from Mowṣil. The feast at the end of Ramaḍân is approaching, and being desirous of joining in this solemnity he goes to the public prayer in his best attire. When the congregation has formed itself into rows, after the manner of Moslem worship, he espies an old man with his eyes closed accompanied by an old woman. The man takes out of a bag a number of papers curiously written or illuminated in variously coloured inks; and the old woman, going through the rows, presents them to those whom she guesses from their appearance to be charitably disposed. One of them falls to the lot of Ḥârith, who finds on it some strange verses full of alliterations and plays on words. He keeps it, and when the old woman, being disappointed in her appeal, returns to reclaim it, he offers her a dirhem on the condition that

she will tell him the name of the author. She informs him that the old man had composed the verses, and that he was a native of Serûj. Ḥârith then guesses that he must be Abû Zayd, and is much concerned to find that he has become blind. When the prayer is over he goes up to him and discovers that he is indeed Abû Zayd, whereupon he presents him with a garment and invites him to his house. No sooner are they in private than Abû Zayd opens his eyes, which are perfectly sound, and Ḥârith discovers that his pretended blindness was a trick to excite pity. Abû Zayd makes a good meal, and after he has had enough sends Ḥârith to the closet to fetch alkali to wash his hands after eating, and a toothpick. When the host returns the old man and his companion are gone; Abû Zayd having as usual made his escape, to avoid a lecture on his hypocrisy and the solicitation of his friend that he would abandon his vagrant life.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I had determined on journeying from Barḳa'îd; but now I noted the signs of the coming feast,—And I disliked to set forth from the city until I had witnessed there the day of adornment.—So when it came on with its rites, bounden or of free will, and brought up its horsemen and footmen,—I followed the tradition in new apparel, and went forth with the people to keep festival.—Now when the congregation of the prayer court was gathered and ranged, and the crowding took men's breath,—There appeared an old man in a pair of cloaks, and his eyes were closed:—And he bore on his arm what was like a horse-bag, and had for a guide an old woman like a goblin.—Then he stopped, as stops one tottering to sink, and greeted with the greeting of him whose voice is feeble.—And when he had made an end of his salutation he circled his five fingers in his wallet,—And brought forth scraps of paper that had been written on with colours of dyes in the season of leisure,—And gave them to his old beldame, bidding her to detect each simple one.—So whenever she perceived of any that his hand was moist in bounty, she cast one of the papers before him.

—Said Al Ḥârith: Now cursed fate allotted to me a scrap whereon was written:—

Sure I have become crushed with pains and fears;
Tried by the proud one, the crafty, the assailer,
By the traitor among my brethren, who hates me for my need,
By jading from those who work to undo my toils.
How oft do I burn through spites and penury and wandering;
How oft do I tramp in shabby garb, thought of by none.
Oh, would that fortune when it wronged me had slain my babes!
For were not my cubs torments to me and ills,
I would not have addressed my hopes to kin or lord:
Nor would I draw my skirts along the track of abasement.
For my garret would be more seemly for me, and my rags more honourable.
Now is there a generous man who will see that the lightening of my loads must be by a denar;
Or will quench the heat of my anxiety by a shirt and trousers.

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now when I had looked on the garb of the verses, I longed for a knowledge of him who wove it, the broiderer of its pattern.—And my thought whispered to me that the way to him was through the old woman, and advised me that a fee to an informer is lawful.—So I watched her, and she was wending through the rows, row by row, begging a dole of the hands, hand by hand.—But not at all did the trouble prosper her; no purse shed aught upon her palm.—Wherefore when her soliciting was baffled, and her circuit wearied her,—She commended herself to God with the "Return," and addressed herself to collect the scraps of paper.—But the Devil made her forget the scrap that I held, and she turned not aside to my spot:—But went back to the old man weeping at the denial, complaining of the oppression of the time.—And he said, "In God's hands I am, to God I commit my case; there is no strength or power but by God," then he recited:—

There remains not any pure, not any sincere; not a spring, not a helper:

But of basenesses there is one level; not any is trusty, not any of worth.

Then said he to her, "Cheer thy soul and promise it good; collect the papers and count them."—She said, "Truly I counted them when I asked them back, and I found that one of them the hand of loss had seized."—He said, "Perdition on thee, Wretch; shall we be hindered, alas, both of the prey and the net, both of the brand and the wick? surely this is a new handful to the load."—Then did the old woman hasten back, retracing her path to seek her scroll; and when she drew near to me I put with the paper a dirhem and a mite:—And said to her, "If thou hast a fondness for the polished, the engraved (and I pointed to the dirhem) shew me the secret, the obscure;—But if thou willest not to explain, take then the mite and begone."—Then she inclined to the getting of that whole full moon, the bright-faced, the large.—So she said, "Quit contention and ask what thou wilt."—Whereupon I asked her of the old man and his country, of the poem, and of him who wove its mantle.—She said, "Truly, the old man is of the people of Serûj, and he it was who broidered that woven poem."—Then she snatched the dirhem with the snatch of a hawk, and shot away as shoots the darting arrow.—But it troubled my heart that perchance it was Abû Zayd who was indicated, and my grief kindled at his mishap with his eyes.—And I should have preferred to have gone suddenly on him and talked to him, that I might test the quality of my discernment upon him.—But I was unable to come to him save by treading on the necks of the congregation, a thing for-

bidden in the law:—And, moreover, I was unwilling that people should be annoyed by me, or that blame should arrive to me.—So I cleaved to my place, but made his form the fetter of my sight, until the sermon was ended, and to leap to him was lawful.—Then I went briskly to him and examined him in spite of the closing of his eyelids.—And, lo! my shrewdness was as the shrewdness of Ibn 'Abbâs, and my discernment as the discernment of Iyâs.—So at once I made myself known, and presented him with one of my tunics, and bade him to my bread.—And he was joyful at my bounty and recognition, and acceded to the call to my loaves;—And he set forth, and my hand was his leading cord, my shadow his conductor;—And the old woman was the third prop of the pot; yes, by the Watcher from whom no secret is hidden!—Now, when he had taken seat in my nest, and I had set before him what hasty meal was in my power, he said, "Ḥârith, is there with us a third?"—I said, "There is none but the old woman."—He said, "From her no secret is withheld."—Then he opened his eyes and stared round with the twin balls, and, lo! the two lights of his face kindled like the Farḳadân.—And I was joyful at the safety of his sight, but marvelled at the strangeness of his ways.—Nor did quiet possess me, nor did patience fit with me, until I asked him, "What led thee to feign blindness; thou, with thy journeying in desolate places, and thy traversing of wildernesses, and thy pushing into far lands?"—But he made show as if his mouth were full, and kept as though busied with his meal:—Until when he had fulfilled his need, he sharpened his look upon me and recited:

Since Time (and he is the father of mankind) makes himself blind to the right in his purposes and aims,
I too have assumed blindness, so as to be called a brother of it;—what wonder that one should match himself with his father!

Then said he to me, Rise, and go to the closet, and fetch me alkali that may clear the eye, and clean the hand, and soften the skin, and perfume the breath, and brace the gums, and strengthen the stomach:—And let it be clean of box, fragrant of odour, new of pounding, delicate of powdering;—So that one touching it shall count it to be eye paint, and one smelling it shall fancy it to be camphor.—And join with it a toothpick choice in material, delightful in use, goodly in shape, that invites to the repast:—And let it have the slimness of a lover, and the polish of a sword, and the sharpness of the lance of war, and the pliancy of a green bough.—Said Al Ḥârith: Then I rose to do what he bade that I might rid him of the trace of his food:—And thought not that he purposed to deceive by sending me into the closet; nor suspected that he was mocking of his messenger when he called for the alkali and toothpick.—But when I returned with what was asked for, in less than the drawing of a breath, I found that the hall was empty, and that the old man and woman had sped away.—Then was I extreme in anger at his deceit, and I pressed on his track in search of him;—But he was as one who is sunk in the sea, or has been borne aloft to the clouds of heaven.

THE EIGHTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF MA'ARRAH."

This Assembly, like several others that will be met with in the course of the work, is so essentially Arabic as almost to forbid intelligible translation. Two suitors, an old man and a youth, appear before the Kadi of Ma'arrah. The former narrates to the Kadi that he had possessed a beautiful and attractive, yet obedient and active, slave girl; that the youth had borrowed her, treated her roughly, and then returned her in an infirm state. The youth admits the charge, but declares that he had offered sufficient compensation; and then complains that the old man detained as a pledge a male slave of his, who was of good origin and qualities, and highly serviceable to his master. The Kadi perceives from the style of these addresses that the language is enigmatical, and bids the litigants speak plainly. The youth then improvises some verses to explain that by a slave girl the old man meant a needle which the youth had borrowed, and the eye of which he had broken by accident as he was drawing the thread through it; the male slave which the old man detained was a pencil or *stylus* for the application of *kohl*, the dark pigment with which Orientals anoint the eyelid to heighten by contrast the lustre of the eye. The old man in his turn admits the truth of this, but pleads in mournful verse his poverty and his inability to bear the loss even of a needle. The Kadi, touched with pity, bestows a trifle on both, and they depart joyously. But almost immediately he suspects that he has been deceived, and sends an attendant after them to bring them back. When they are again in the court, the Kadi charges them with deceit. The boy is abashed, but the old man steps forward boldly and confesses that he is the noted impostor of Serûj, and that the boy is his son; that they never had either needle or kohl pencil, but had devised the story to excite pity. The Kadi, charmed with their literary skill, pardons their offence and dismisses them with a caution. The chief feature in the composition is the enigmatical description of the needle and pencil, which depends on the double meanings of the words and phrases contained in it. Some of these are so subtle that even the native commentators are undecided about them; and we may assume that the *double-entente* of passages like this, and the similar address in the Thirteenth Assembly, was among the lessons which Hariri is said to have taught to his pupils. The commentators, who are often profuse of interpretation where there

is no difficulty, are somewhat brief when they have to deal with these dark compositions. Even the loquacious Sherîshi, who sometimes gives whole pages of anecdote and poetical quotation to illustrate a single word, passes over in silence phrases where there evidently lurks a second and hidden sense. The present translation is, it is hoped, an adequate interpretation of the author's meaning.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: Among the wonders of time, I saw that two suitors came before the Kadi of Ma'arrat an No'mân:—From the one of them the two excellencies of life had departed, while the other was as a bough of the ben tree.—And the old man said: God strengthen the judge, as by him He strengthens whoever seeks judgment.—Behold I had a slave girl, elegant of shape, smooth of cheek, patient to labour;—At one time she ambled like a good steed, at another she slept quietly in her bed: even in July thou wouldst feel her touch to be cool.—She had understanding and discretion, sharpness and wit, a hand with fingers, but a mouth without teeth: yet did she pique as with tongue of snake, and saunter in training robe; and she was displayed in blackness and whiteness; and she drank, but not from cisterns.—She was now truth-telling now beguiling; now hiding, now peeping forth; yet fitted for employment, obedient in poverty and in wealth: if thou didst spurn she showed affection, but if thou didst put her from thee, she remained quietly apart.—Generally would she serve thee, and be courteous to thee, though sometimes she might be froward to thee and pain thee, and trouble thee.[1]—Now this youth asked her service of

[1] The meaning of this passage, when applied to a needle, is as follows:—I had a needle, straight of shape and smooth of side, lasting for work; that sometimes moved quickly in the sewer's hands, and sometimes rested in the needle-box; it was sometimes

me for a purpose of his own, and I made her his servant, without reward;—On the condition that he should enjoy the use of her, but not burden her with more than she could bear.—But he forced on her too hard a work, and exacted of her long labour;—Then returned her to me broken in health, offering a compensation which I accept not.

Then said the youth: Sure the old man is more truthful than the Ḳaṭa: but as for my hurting her it fell out by mistake.—And now have I pledged to him in payment of his damage, a slave[1] of mine, of equal birth

filed in July, it had strength to hold with its rein of thread, it had sharpness and point: it hemmed the garment by the aid of the sewer's fingers; it had a mouth (eye) without teeth; it sometimes pricked with its point, as it was driven through the cloth; it carried a long thread after it; it had sometimes a black and sometimes a white thread; it was bedewed only with the sweat of the sewer's hand; it sewed the cloth or lined it; it now hid itself behind the cloth, and now appeared again; it was adapted for use; it went easily into any orifice, small or large; if thou didst rend anything it joined it, but if thou didst lay it aside in the needle-box, it remained where it was put; mostly did it serve thee and adorn thee by its work, but sometimes it would prick thee, and pain thee and trouble thee.

[1] The meaning of this passage, when applied to a koḥl pencil, is as follows: I had a koḥl pencil, the same at both ends, tracing its origin to the cutler, free from rust and defect; often brought near the apple of the eye; it conferred beauty and produced admiration; it fed the pupil of the eye with ointment, but went not near the tongue; when it was blackened with the ointment it was liberal of it, when it marked the eye it beautified it; when it was supplied with ointment it supplied the eye with it, and when more was required it added more. It remained not always in its case, and seldom anointed except two eyes at a time; it gave plentifully of the koḥl that was on it, and was lifted up to the eye for the purpose; it was constantly attached to the koḥl case, although the two might be of a different material (that is, the pencil might be of gold and the case of glass or silver); though it was used for adorning it was not of a soft substance but of metal.

as regards either kin, tracing his lineage to Al Ḳayn, free from stain and disgrace, whose place was the apple of his master's eye.—He shewed forth kindness, and called up admiration; he nourished mankind, and set guard on his tongue.—If he was placed in power he was generous, if he marked aught for his own he was noble with it; if he was supplied he gave of his supply, and when he was asked for more he added.—He stayed not in the house, and rarely visited his wives, save two by two.—He was generous with his possession, he was lofty in his bounty; he kept with his spouse although she was not of his own clay; and there was pleasure in his comeliness, although he was not desired for his effeminacy.

Then said to them the Kadi, "Now either explain or depart." Then pressed forward the lad, and said:

He lent me a needle to darn my rags, which use has worn and blackened;

And its eye broke in my hand by chance, as I drew the thread through it.

But the old man would not forgive me the paying for it when he saw that it was spoiled;

But said, "Give me a needle like it, or a price, after thou hast mended it."

And he keeps my kohl pencil by him as a pledge: oh, the shame that he has gotten by so doing:

For my eye is dry through giving him this pledge; my hand fails to ransom its anointer.

Now by this statement fathom the depth of my misery and pity one unused to bear it.

Then turned the Kadi to the old man, and said, "Come, speak without glozing," and he said—

I swear by the holy place of sacrifice, and the devout whom the slope of Mina brings together;

If the time had been my helper, thou wouldst not have seen me taking in pledge the pencil which he has pledged to me.

Nor would I bring myself to seek a substitute for a needle that he had spoiled, no nor the price of it.

But the bow of calamities shoots at me with deadly arrows from here and there:

And to know my condition is to know his; misery, and distress, and exile, and sickness.

Fortune has put us on a level: I am his like in misery, and he is as I.

He cannot ransom his pencil now that it lies pledged in my hand:

And, through the narrowness of my own means, it is not within my bounds to forgive him his offending.

Now this is my tale and his: so look upon us, and judge between us, and pity us.

Now when the Kadi had learnt their stories, and was aware of their penury and their distinction,—He took out for them a denar from under his prayer cushion, and said, "With this end and decide your contention."—But the old man caught it before the youth, and claimed the whole of it in earnest, not in jest;—Saying to the youth, "Half is mine as my share of the bounty, and thy share is mine, in payment for my needle:—Nor do I swerve from justice, so come and take thy pencil."—Now there fell on the youth, at the words of the old man, a sadness at which the heart of the Kadi grew sullen, stirring its sorrow for the lost denar.—Yet did he cheer the concern of the youth and his anguish by a few dirhems which he doled to him.—Then he said to the two, "Avoid transactions, and put away disputes, and come not before me with wranglings, for I have no purse of fine-money for you."—And they rose to go out from him, rejoicing at his gift, fluent in his praise.—But as for the Kadi, his ill-humour subsided not after his stone had dripped; his sad look cleared not away after his rock had oozed.—But when he recovered from his fit he turned to his attendants,—And said, "My perception is imbued with the

thought, and my guess announces to me, that these are practisers of craft, not suitors in a claim:—But what is the way to fathom them, and to draw forth their secret?"—Then said to him the Knowing One of his assemblage, the Light of his following:—"Surely the discovery of what they hide must be through themselves."—So he bade an attendant follow them and bring them back; and when they stood before him he said to them, "Tell me truly your camel's age: so shall ye be secure from the consequence of your deceit."—Then did the lad shrink back and ask for pardon; but the old man stepped forward and said;

I am the Serûji and this is my son; and the cub at the proving is like the lion.

Now never has his hand not mine done wrong in matter of needle or pencil:

But only fortune, the harming, the hostile, has brought us to this, that we came forth to beg

Of each one whose palm is moist, whose spring is sweet; of each whose palm is close, whose hand is fettered;

By every art, and with every aim: by earnest, if it prosper, and if not, by jest.

That we may draw forth a drop for our thirsty lot, and consume our life in wretched victual.

And afterward Death is on the watch for us; if he fall not on us to-day he will fall to-morrow.

Then said the Kadi to him, "Oh rare! how admirable are the breathings of thy mouth; well done! should I say of thee, were it not for the guile that is in thee.—Now know that I am of those that warn thee, and will beware of thee.—So act not again deceitfully with judges, but fear the might of those who bear rule.—For not every minister will excuse, and not at every season will speech be listened to."—Then the old man promised to follow his counsel, and to abstain from disguising his

character.—And he departed from the Kadi's presence, while the guile beamed from his forehead.—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now I never saw aught more wonderful than these things in the changes of my journeys, nor read aught like them in the records of books.

THE NINTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF ALEXANDRIA."

This is one of the two Assemblies of Ḥarîri which have been translated and annotated by De Sacy in his Chrestomathy. Ḥârith in his wanderings comes to Alexandria, and, in accordance with his custom, makes the acquaintance of the Kadi, who, as appears in the sequel, is a good-natured and benevolent man. One evening, in winter, the Kadi is distributing the public alms, when an ill-looking old man is brought in by a young and handsome woman who accuses him of having married her on false pretences. She declares that he had deceived her father by giving out that he had an excellent trade as a pearl-merchant; that he had been incautiously accepted, and that now, when it was too late, she had discovered that he had no business at all. Moreover, he had taken all her dress and furniture, piece by piece, and sold it to keep himself in idleness, leaving her and her child to starve. The Kadi is indignant, and threatens to send the husband to prison, unless he can clear himself of the charge. The defendant is in no way disconcerted, but at once improvises some elegant verses, in which he admits his poverty, and that he had sold his wife's effects, but denies that he had deceived her in calling himself a "pearl-stringer," for the pearls which he meant were the pearls of thought, by stringing which into elegant poems he had been accustomed to make a large income from the liberality of the rich and noble. Now, however, times were changed; war and trouble had come upon the earth, and a race of niggards had succeeded the generous patrons of the old days. The Kadi accepts the excuse, bids the woman submit herself to her husband, and gives them some of the alms money; on receiving which the old man triumphantly carries off his wife. Ḥârith had discovered that it was Abû Zayd, but was afraid to tell the Kadi, because in that case he might have declined to relieve such an im-

postor. But when he is gone, Hârith cannot forbear suggesting that he should be followed and some news of him brought back. A messenger is sent and returns quickly to say that he found Abû Zayd dancing and singing in joy at his success. The Kadi treats the affair as a good jest; and declares that if he had known who he was he would have been still more liberal. This is the first appearance of Abû Zayd's young wife, who in the fortieth Assembly is made to rival her husband in wit, learning, and volubility.

Al Hârith, son of Hammâm, related: The liveliness of youth and the desire of gain sped me on until I had traversed all that is between Farghânah and Ghânah.—And I dived into depths to gather fruits, and plunged into perils to reach my needs.—Now I had caught from the lips of the learned, and understood from the commandments of the wise—That it behoves the well-bred, the sagacious, when he enters a strange city, to conciliate its Kadi and possess himself of his favour:—That his back may be strengthened in litigation, that he may be secure in a strange land from the wrong of the powerful.—So I took this doctrine as my guide and made it the leading-cord to my advantages.—And I entered not a city, I went not into a lair, but I mingled myself with its judge as water is mingled with wine, and strengthened myself by his patronage as bodies are strengthened by souls.—Now while I was in presence of the judge of Alexandria one cold evening, and he had brought out the alms-money to divide it among the needy,—Behold there entered an ill-looking old man whom a young matron dragged along.—And she said: God strengthen the Kadi and through him make concord to be lasting:—Know that I am a woman of stock the most noble, of root the most pure, of mother's and father's kin the most honourable:—My character is moderation, my disposition is

contentment; my nature is to be a goodly help-meet; between me and my neighbours is a wide difference.—Now whenever there wooed me any who had built up honour or were lords of wealth—My father silenced and chid them and misliked their suit and their gift:—Making plea that he had covenanted with God Most High that he would not ally himself save with the master of a handicraft.—Then did Providence destine for my calamity and pain that this deceiver should present himself in my father's hall;—And swear among his people that he fulfilled his condition:—Asserting that long time he had strung pearl to pearl and sold them for great price. —Then was my father deceived by the gilding of his falsehood, and married me to him before proving his condition.—And when he had drawn me forth from my covert, and carried me away from my people, and removed me to his habitation, and brought me under his bond,—I found him slothful, a sluggard; I discovered him to be a lie-a-bed, a slumberer.—Now I had come to him with apparel and goodly show, with furniture and affluence.—But he ceased not to sell it in a losing market and to squander the price in greedy feeding,—Until he had altogether destroyed whatever was mine, and spent my property on his need.—So when he had made to me to forget the taste of rest and left my house cleaner than my hand's palm;—I said to him, "Sir, know that there is no concealment after distress, no perfume after the wedding.—Rise up then to gain something by thy trade, to gather the fruit of thy skill."—But he declared that his trade had been struck with slackness through the violence that was abroad in the earth.—Also I have a boy by him, thin as a toothpick: neither

of us gets a fill by him, and through hunger our weeping to him ceases not.—So I have brought him to thee and set him before thee, that thou mayest test the substance of his assertion, and decide between us as God shall show thee.

Then turned the Kadi to him and said: "Thou hast heard thy wife's story; now testify of thyself: else will I discover thy deceit and bid thy imprisonment."—But he looked down as looks the serpent; then girt up his garment for a long strife, and said:

Hear my story, for it is a wonder; there is laughter in its tale, and there is wailing.

I am a man on whose qualities there is no blame, neither is there suspicion on his glory.

Serûj is my home where I was born, and my stock is Ghassân when I trace my lineage:

And study is my business; to dive deep in learning is my pursuit; and, oh! how excellent a seeking.

And my capital is the magic of speech, out of which are moulded both verse and prose.

I dive into the deep of eloquence, and from it I choose the pearls and select them:

I cull of speech the ripe fruit and the new; while another gathers but firing of the wood:

I take the phrase of silver, and when I have moulded it men say that it is gold.

Now formerly I drew forth wealth by the learning I had gotten; I milked by it:

And my foot's sole in its dignity mounted to ranges above which were no higher steps.

Oft were the presents brought in pomp to my dwelling, but I accepted not everyone who gave.

But to-day learning is the chattel of slackest sale in the market of him on whom hope depends.

The honour of its sons is not respected; neither are relationship and alliance with them regarded.

It is as though they were corpses in their courtyards, from whose stench men withdraw and turn aside.

Now my heart is confounded through my trial by the times;—strange is their changing.

The stretch of my arm is straitened through the straitness of my hand's means; cares and grief assail me.

And my fortune, the blameworthy, has led me to the paths of that which honour deems base.

For I sold until there remained to me not a mat nor household goods to which I might turn.

So I indebted myself until I had burdened my neck by the carrying of a debt such that ruin had been lighter.

Then five days I wrapped my entrails upon hunger; but when the hunger scorched me,

I could see no goods except her outfit, in the selling of which I might go about and bestir myself.

So I went about with it; but my soul was loathing, and my eye tearful, and my heart saddened.

But when I made free with it, I passed not the bound of her consent, that her wrath should rise against me.

And if what angers her be her fancying that it was my fingers that should make gain by stringing;

Or that when I purposed to woo her I tinseled my speech that my need might prosper:

I swear by Him to whose Ka'beh the companies journey when the fleet camels speed them onward,

That deceit towards chaste ladies is not of my nature, nor are glozing and lying my badge.

Since I was reared nought has attached to my hand save the swiftly-moving reeds and the books:

For it is my wit that strings necklaces, not my hand; what is strung is my poetry and not chaplets.

And this is the craft I meant as that by which I gathered and gained.

So give ear to my explaining, as thou hast given ear to her; and show respect to neither, but judge as is due.

Now when he had completed the structure of his story and perfected his recitation, the Kadi turned to the young woman, being heart struck at the verses:—And said, Know that it is settled among all judges and those who bear authority—That the race of the generous is perished, and that the times incline to the

niggardly.—Now I imagine that thy husband is truthful in his speech, free from blame.—For lo! he has acknowledged the debt to thee, and spoken the clear truth; he has given proof that he can string verses, and it is plain that he is bared to the bone.—Now to vex him who shows excuse is baseness, to imprison the destitute is a sin: to conceal poverty is self-denial, to await relief with patience is devotion.—So return to thy chamber and pardon the master of thy virginity:—Refrain from thy sharpness of tongue and submit to the will of thy Lord.—Then in the almsgiving he assigned them a portion, and of the dirhems he gave them a pinch; and said to them, "Beguile yourselves with this drop, moisten yourselves with this driblet:—And endure against the fraud and the trouble of the time, for 'it may be that God will bring victory or some ordinance from himself.' "—Then they arose to go, and on the old man was the joy of one loosed from the bond, and the exulting of one who is in affluence after need.

Said the narrator: Now I knew that he was Abû Zayd in the hour that his sun peeped forth and his spouse reviled him:—And I went near to declare his versatility and the fruiting of his divers branches.—But then I was afraid that the Kadi would hit on his falsehood and the lackering of his tongue, and not see fit, when he knew him, to train him to his bounty.—So I forebore from speech with the forbearing of one who doubts, and I folded up mention of him as the roll is folded over the writing:—Save that when he had departed and had come whither he was to come,—I said, "If there were one who would set out on his track, he might bring us the kernel of his story, and

what tissues he is spreading forth.—Then the Kadi sent one of his trusty ones after him and bade him to spy out of his tidings.—But he delayed not to return bounding in, and to come back loudly laughing.—Said the Kadi to him, "Well, Abû Maryam!—He said, "I have seen a wonder; I have heard what gives me a thrill."—Said the Kadi to him, "What hast thou seen, and what is it thou hast learnt?"—He said, "Since the old man went forth he has not ceased to clap with his hands and to caper with his feet and to sing with the full of his cheeks:

I was near falling into trouble through an impudent jade;
And should have gone to prison but for the Kadi of Alexandria."

Then the Kadi laughed till his hat fell off, and his composure was lost:—But when he returned to gravity and had followed excess by prayer for pardon,—He said, "O God, by the sanctity of thy most honoured servants, forbid that I should imprison men of letters."—Then said he to that trusty one, "Hither with him!" and he set forth earnest in the search; but returned after a while, telling that the man was gone.—Then said the Kadi, "Know that if he had been here he should have had no cause to fear,—For I would have imparted to him as he deserves; I would have shown him that *the latter state is better for him than the former.*"—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, Now, when I saw the leaning of the Kadi towards him, and that yet the fruit of the Kadi's notice was lost to him,—There came on me the repentance of Al Farazdaḳ when he put away Nawâr, or of Al Kosa'î when the daylight appeared.

THE TENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF RAḤBAH."

In this Assembly Abû Zayd is found making gain by his usual questionable arts. At Raḥbah, on the Euphrates, Ḥârith beholds a crowd following an elderly man who is dragging along a handsome youth. The former accuses the boy of having killed his son, and it is agreed to go before the Governor. The purpose of the elder, who proves in the end to be Abû Zayd, is simply to induce the Governor to buy off so handsome a youth from punishment, with the view of taking him into his own household. When they are in court the old man makes his charge, and as he has no witnesses the boy is allowed to clear himself by an oath. But the old man dictates an oath in which he enumerates all the beauties of the boy, and invokes destruction on them if truth be not spoken. The boy refuses to swear by such an oath; and the Governor, who desires to take him out of the power of the old man, then makes up a purse to satisfy the prosecutor. A hundred denars are promised; but as the whole cannot be collected at once the old man says that he will not give up the boy, but will watch him all night. The Governor consents, and soon the two are left together in the courtyard. Ḥârith then accosts Abû Zayd, and asks who is the boy. Abû Zayd replies, that he is his son, and his assistant in his tricks; and that they intend to make their escape early in the morning, and leave the Governor to his disappointment. This they do, and before setting forth Abû Zayd delivers to Ḥârith a sealed paper to be presented to the outwitted magistrate. Ḥârith, dreading to present it, opens it and finds it to contain a copy of satirical verses on the Governor. He tears the paper to pieces, regardless of his promise to his friend. This Assembly is exceedingly elaborate in its diction, and the terms of the oath dictated by Abû Zayd have much poetical beauty. It has been imitated with great felicity by Rückert, whose version has almost the spirit of the original.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related:—The summoning of desire called me to Raḥbah, the city of Mâlik, son of Ṭowḳ,—And I obeyed it, mounted on a fleet camel, and unsheathing an active purpose.—Now when I had cast my anchors there, and fastened my ropes,

and had gone forth from the bath after shaving my head,—I saw a boy cast in the mould of comeliness, and clothed by beauty in the garb of perfection;—And an old man was holding on to his sleeve, asserting that he had slain his son;—But the boy denied knowledge of him and was horror-struck at his suspicion;—And the contention between them scattered its sparks, and the crowding upon them was made up of good and bad.—Now after their quarrelling had been excessive, they agreed to refer to the Governor of the town;—So they hastened to his court with the speed of Sulayk in his career;—And when they were there the old man renewed his charge and claimed help.—So the Governor made the boy speak, for the boy had already fascinated him by the graces of his bright brow, and cloven his understanding by the disposition of his forelocks.—And the boy said, "It is the lie of a great liar against one who is no blood-shedder, and the slander of a knave against one who is not an assassin.—Then said the Governor to the old man, "If two just Moslems testify for thee, well; if not, demand of him the oath."—Said the old man, "Surely he struck him down remote from men, and shed his blood when alone;—And how can I have a witness, when on the spot there was no beholder?—But empower me to dictate an oath that it may appear to thee whether he speaks true or lies."—He said to him, "Thou hast authority for that; thou with thy vehement grief for thy slain son."—Then said the old man to the boy: Say, I swear by Him who hath adorned foreheads with forelocks, and eyes with their black and white, and eyebrows with separation, and smiling teeth with regularity, and eyelids with languor,

and noses with straightness, and cheeks with flame, and mouths with purity, and fingers with softness, and waists with slenderness, that I have not killed thy son by negligence, nor of wilfulness, nor made his head a sheath to my sword;—If it be otherwise, may God strike my eyelid with soreness, and my cheek with freckles, and my forelocks with dropping, and my palm shoot with greenness, and my rose with the ox-eye, and my musk with a foul steam, and my full moon with waning, and my silver with tarnishing, and my rays with the dark.

Then said the boy, "The scorching of affliction be my lot rather than to take such an oath! let me yield to vengeance rather than swear as no one has ever sworn!"—But the old man would nought but make him swallow the oath which he had framed for him, and the draughts which he had bittered.—And the dispute ceased not to blaze between them, and the road of concord to be rugged.—Now the boy, while thus resisting, captivated the Governor by his motions, and made him covet that he should belong to him; until love subdued his heart and fixed in his breast;—And the passion which enslaved him, and the desire which he had imagined tempted him to liberate the boy and then get possession of him, to free him from the noose of the old man, and then catch him himself.—So he said to the old man, "Hast thou a mind for that which is more seemly in the stronger and nearer to god-fearing?"—He said, "Whither art thou pointing that I should follow and not delay?"—He said, "I think it well that thou cease from altercation and be content with a hundred denars,—On condition that I take on

myself part of it, and collect the rest as may be."—Said the old man, "I refuse not; but let there be no failure to thy promise."—Then the Governor paid him down twenty and assigned among his attendants the making up of fifty.—But the robe of evening grew dim, and from this cause the rain of collection was cut short. —Then he said, "Take what is ready and leave disputing; and on me be it to-morrow to accomplish that the rest be doled to thee and reach thee."—Said the old man, "I will do this on the condition that I keep close to him to-night, that the pupil of my eye guard him,— Until when on the dawning of the morn he has made up what remains of the sum of reconciliation,—Shell may get clear of chick, and he may go guiltless as the wolf went guiltless of the blood of the son of Jacob."— Then said to him the Governor, "I think that thou dost not impose what is immoderate or ask what is excessive."

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now when I perceived that the pleadings of the old man were as the pleadings of Ibn Surayj, I knew him to be the Glory of the Serûjis:—And I delayed until the stars of the darkness glittered, and the knots of the crowd dispersed:—And then I sought the Governor's court-yard; and lo! the old man guarding the youth.—And I adjured him by God to say whether he was Abû Zayd: he said, "Yes, by Him who hath permitted the chase."— I said, "Who is this boy, after whom the understanding darts?"—He said, "In kin he is my chick, and in making gain my springe."—I said, "Wilt thou not be satisfied with the graces of his make, and spare the Governor temptation by his forelock."—He said, "Were it not that

his forehead put forth its ringlets, I should not have snatched the fifty."—Then he said, "Pass the night near me that we may quench the fire of grief, and give enjoyment its turn after separation.—For I have resolved to slip away at dawn, and to burn the Governor's heart with the flame of regret."—Said Al Ḥârith, Then I spent the night with him in conversation more pleasant than a garden of flowers, or a woodland of trees:—Until when the Wolf's Tail lighted the horizon, and the brightening of the day-break came on in its time, —He mounted the back of the highway, and left the Governor to taste burning torment.—And he committed to me, in the hour of his departure a paper firmly closed,—And said, "Hand it to the Governor when he has been bereft of composure, when he has convinced himself of our flight."—But I broke the seal as one who would free himself from a letter of Mutelemmis, and behold there was written in it:

Tell the Governor whom I have left, after my departure, repenting, grieving, biting his hands,

That the old man has stolen his money and the young one his heart; and he is scorched in the flame of a double regret.

He was generous with his coin (عين) when love blinded his eye (عين), and he has ended with losing either عين.

Calm thy grief, O afflicted, for it profits not to seek the traces after the substance is gone.

But if what has befallen thee is terrible to thee as the ill-fate of Al Ḥosayn is terrible to the Moslems;

Yet hast thou gotten in exchange for it understanding and caution; and the wise man, the prudent, wishes for these.

So henceforth resist desires, and know that the chasing of gazelles is not easy;

No, nor does every bird enter the springe, even though it be surrounded by silver.

And how many a one who seeks to make a prey becomes a prey himself, and meets with nought but the shoes of Ḥonayn!

Now consider well, and forecast not every thundercloud: many a thundercloud may have in it the bolts of death:

And cast down thine eye, that thou mayest rest from a passion by which thou wouldest clothe thyself with the garment of infamy and disgrace.

For the trouble of man is the following of the soul's desire; and the seed of desire is the longing look of the eye.

Said the narrator,—But I tore the paper piece-meal, and cared not whether he blamed or pardoned me.

THE ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF SÂWEH."

This and the following Assembly are justly reckoned among the master-pieces of the author. To pass suddenly from the most solemn subjects to pleasantry, to place in the mouth of a clever impostor the most serious warnings that can be addressed to mankind may be morally objectionable; but in the Moslem world, where religion is mixed up with all the concerns of life, and pious discourse and phrases abound, it excites little repugnance. The design of the author in the present composition was to produce an elaborate sermon in rhymed prose and in verse, and his genius takes a higher flight than usual. The incident on which the Assembly is founded is simple. Ḥârith, in a fit of religious zeal, betakes himself to the public burial ground of the city of Sâweh, for the purpose of contemplation. He finds a funeral in progress, and when it is over, an old man, with his face muffled in a cloak, takes his stand on a hillock, and pours forth a discourse on the certainty of death and judgment, rebuking his hearers for their worldly selfishness, and warning them that wealth and power are of little avail against the general leveller. He then rises into poetry and declaims a piece which is one of the noblest productions of Arabic literature. In lofty morality, in religious fervour, in beauty of language, in power and grace of metre, this magnificent hymn is unsurpassed. From this, and other similar compositions of Ḥarîri, a better idea of what is noblest and purest in Islam will be gained, than from all the works of the most orthodox doctors. Ḥârith, like the others who are present, is much affected; but he is indignant when he finds that the preacher is re-

ceiving abundant alms, and that beyond a doubt he is Abû Zayd. He taxes him with his hypocrisy, and receives an impudent reply. They then separate angrily. In this Assembly a view of moral duties and future judgment is exhibited which differs little from that of Christians. The enlightened and polished man of letters of the fifth century was not likely to teach the coarse doctrines of a sensual paradise, to be secured by hard fighting, which roused the ignorant warriors of Arabia in the first days of Islam. In all the work of Ḥarîri, there is not a trace of this theology, which the West erroneously attributes to every Moslem. Self-denial and benevolence are with him the duties of every man; and by them each may hope to obtain everlasting happiness, but on the nature of both future rewards and punishments he is discreetly silent.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was aware of hardness of heart while I sojourned at Sâweh.—So I betook myself to the Tradition handed down, that its cure is by visiting the tombs.—And when I had reached the mansion of the dead, the storehouse of mouldering remains, I saw an assemblage over a grave that had been dug, and a corpse that was being buried.—So I drew aside to them, meditating on the end of man, and calling to mind those of my people who were gone.—And when they had sepulchred the dead, and the crying of Alas! was over, an old man stood forth on high, from a hillock, leaning on a staff.—And he had veiled his face with his cloak, and disguised his form for craftiness.—And he said: *Let those who work, work for an end like this.*—Now take thought, O ye negligent, and gird yourselves, ye slothful, and look well, ye observers.—How is it with you that the burying of your fellows grieves you not, and that the pouring in of the mould frightens you not; that ye heed not the visitations of misfortune; that ye prepare not for the going down to your graves; that ye are not moved to tears at the eye that weeps; that ye take not warning at the

death-message when it is heard; that ye are not affrighted when an intimate is lost; that ye are not saddened when the mourning assembly is gathered?—One of you follows home the dead man's bier, but his heart is set towards his house;—And he is present at the burying of his kinsman, but his thought is of securing his portion.—He leaves his loved friend with the worms, then retires alone with his pipes and lutes.—Ye have sorrowed over your riches, if but a grain were notched away, yet have ye been forgetful of the cutting off of your friends:—And ye have been cast down at the befalling of adversity, but have made little of the perishing of your kindred.—Ye have laughed at a funeral as ye laughed not in the hour of dancing; ye have walked wantonly behind biers, as ye walked not in the day that ye grasped gifts.—Ye have turned from the recital of the mourning women to the preparing of banquets; and from the anguish of the bereaved to daintiness in feastings.—Ye care not for him who moulders, and ye move not the thought of death in your mind.—So that it is as if ye were joined to Death by clientship, or had gotten security from Time, or were confident of your own safety, or had made sure of a peace with the Destroyer of delights.—No! it is an ill thing that ye imagine.—Again, no! surely ye shall learn. Then he recited:

O thou who claimest understanding; how long, O brother of delusion, wilt thou marshal sin and blame, and err exceeding error?

Is not the shame plain to thee? doth not hoariness warn thee? (and in its counsel there is no doubtfulness); nor hath thy hearing become deaf.

Is not Death calling thee? doth he not make thee hear his voice? dost thou not fear thy passing away, so as to be wary and anxious?

How long wilt thou be bewildered in carelessness, and walk

proudly in vanity, and go eagerly to diversion, as if death were not for all?

Till when will last thy swerving, and thy delaying to mend habits that unite in thee vices whose every sort shall be collected in thee?

If thou anger thy Master thou art not disquieted at it; but if thy scheme be bootless thou burnest with vexation.

If the graving of the yellow one gleam to thee thou art joyful; but if the bier pass by thee thou feignest grief, and there is no grief.

Thou resistest him who counselleth righteousness; thou art hard in understanding; thou swervest aside: but thou followest the guiding of him who deceiveth, who lieth, who defameth.

Thou walkest in the desire of thy soul; thou schemest after money; but thou forgettest the darkness of the grave, and rememberest not what is there.

But if true happiness had looked upon thee, thy own look would not have led thee amiss; nor wouldest thou be saddened when the preaching wipeth away griefs.

Thou shalt weep blood, not tears, when thou perceivest that no company can protect thee in the Court of Assembling; no kinsman of mother or father.

It is as though I could see thee when thou goest down to the vault and divest deep; when thy kinsmen have committed thee to a place narrower than a needle's eye.

There is the body stretched out that the worms may devour it, until the coffin-wood is bored through and the bones moulder.

And afterward there is no escape from that review of souls; since Ṣirâṭ is prepared; its bridge is stretched over the fire to every one who cometh thither.

And how many a guide shall go astray! and how many a great one shall be vile! and how many a learned one shall slip and say "The business surpasseth."

Therefore hasten, O simple one, to that by which the bitter is made sweet; for thy life is now near to decay and thou hast not withdrawn thyself from blame.

And rely not on fortune though it be soft, though it be gay: for so wilt thou be found like one deceived by a viper that spitteth venom.

And lower thyself from thy loftiness; for death is meeting thee and reaching at thy collar; and he is one who shrinketh not back when he hath purposed.

And avoid proud turning away of the cheek if fortune have prospered thee: bridle thy speech if it would run astray; for how happy is he who bridleth it!

And relieve the brother of sorrow, and believe him when he speaketh; and mend thy ragged conduct; for he hath prospered who mendeth it.

And plume him whose plumage hath fallen in calamity great or small; and sorrow not at the loss, and be not covetous in amassing.

And resist thy base nature, and accustom thy hand to liberality, and listen not to blame for it, and keep thy hand from hoarding.

And make provision of good for thy soul, and leave that which will bring on ill, and prepare the ship for thy journey, and dread the deep of the sea.

Thus have I given my precepts, friend, and shown as one who showeth clearly: and happy the man who walketh by my doctrines and maketh them his example.

Then he drew back his sleeve from an arm strong of sinew, on which he had fastened the splints of deceit not of fracture;—Presenting himself to beg in the garb of impudence:—And by it he beguiled those people until his sleeve was brimmed and full;—Then he came down from the hillock merry at the gift.—Said the narrator: But I pulled him from behind by the hem of his cloak; and he turned to me submissively, and faced me, saluting me:—And lo! it was our old Abû Zayd, in his very self, and in all his deceit: and I said to him,

How many, Abû Zayd, will be the varieties of thy cunning to drive the prey to thy net? and wilt thou not care who censures?

And he answered without shame and without hesitation:

Look well, and leave thy blaming; for, tell me, hast thou ever known a time when a man would not win of the world when the game was in his hands.

Then I said to him: Away with thee, Old Shaykh of Hell, laden with infamy!—For there is nothing like thee for the fairness of thy seeming and the foulness of thy purpose; except silvered dung or a whited sewer.—Then we parted; and I went away to the right, and he

went away to the left; and I set myself to the quarter of the south, and he set himself to the quarter of the north.

THE TWELFTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF DAMASCUS."

Ḥârith, being in affluence, crosses from Irak to Damascus to enjoy the luxury of that city. After he has had his fill of pleasure he bethinks himself of returning homeward, and joins a caravan that is about to cross the Semâweh, the desert which lies between Syria and the Euphrates. The travellers are ready to depart, but are delayed by their inability to find an escort, which they think indispensable for their protection against robbers. While they are consulting they are watched by a dervish, who at last announces to them that he has the means of keeping them safe from harm; and, on their inquiring further, tells them that his safeguard is a magic form of words revealed to him in a dream. They are at first incredulous, but at length consent to take him with them, and to use his incantation. He then repeats it, and it proves to be a prayer full of assonances and rhymes, beseeching the general protection of the Almighty. They all learn it by heart and then set forth, repeating it twice a day on their journey. As they are not molested on the road they judge the charm to have been successful; and when they come in sight of 'Ânah, the first town on the other side of the desert, they reward him richly with what he likes best, gold and jewels. When he has taken all he can get, he makes his escape, and the next thing they hear of him is that he is drinking in the taverns of 'Ânah, a city celebrated for its wine. Ḥârith, shocked at this enormity in a pious dervish, determines to seek him out, and soon finds him revelling amid wine and music in the guest chamber of a wine-shop. He taxes him with his wickedness, and then the old man improvises a Bacchanalian chant, which is one of the finest pieces in Ḥarîri's work. In form this poem resembles that which is introduced into the last Assembly, though the metre is more light and lively, as Ḥarîri, no doubt, desired to display his genius by the contrast. Ḥârith, charmed with the verses, asks who the old man is; and from his answer discovers that he is Abû Zayd. He makes an ineffectual attempt to reclaim him, and then quits the wine-shop, repentant at having set foot in such a place. This Assembly is one of the most

admired productions of the author, who has lavished on it all the resources of his marvellous rhetoric. It has been imitated with great skill by Rückert; who, however, wanders very far from the original.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related:—I journeyed from Irak to the Ghûṭah; and then was I master of haltered steeds and envied wealth.—Freedom of arm called me to diversion, fullness of store led me to pride.—And when I had reached the place after toil of soul, after making lean my camel,—I found it such as tongues describe it; and in it was whatever souls long for or eyes delight in.—So I thanked the bounty of travel and ran a heat with pleasure:—And began there to break the seals of desires and gather the clusters of delights.—Until some travellers were making ready for the journey to Irak, and I had so recovered from my drowning, that regret visited me in calling to mind my home and longing after my fold.—Then I struck the tents of exile and saddled the steeds of return.—And when the company had equipped themselves and agreement was completed, we shrank from setting forth without taking with us a guard.—And we sought one from every tribe and used a thousand devices to obtain him.—But to find him in the clans failed, so that we thought he was not among the living.—And for the want of such a one the resolves of the travellers were bewildered, and they assembled at the gate of Jayrûn to take counsel.—And they ceased not tying and untying, and plaiting and twining, until suggestion was exhausted and the hoper despaired.—But opposite them was a person whose demeanour was as the demeanour of the youthful, and his garb as the garb of monks, and in his hand was the rosary of women, and in his eyes the mark of giddiness from watchings.—

And he had fastened his gaze on the assemblage and sharpened his ear to steal a hearing.—And when it was the time of their turning homeward and their secret was manifest to him,—He said to them, "O people, let your care relieve itself, let your mind be tranquil; for I will guard you with that which shall put off your fear and show itself in accord with you."—Said the narrator: Then we asked him to show us concerning his safe conduct, and promised him a higher wage for it than for an embassy.—And he declared it to be some words which he had been taught in a dream, whereby to guard himself from the malice of mankind.—Then began one to steal a look at another, and to move his eyes between glances sideward and downward.—So that it was plain to him that we thought meanly of his story, and conceived it to be futile.—Whereupon he said, How is it that ye take my earnest for jest, and treat my gold as dross?—Now, by Allah, oft have I gone through fearful tracts and entered among deadly dangers:—And with this I have needed not the companying of a guard or to take with me a quiver.—Besides, I will remove what gives you doubt, I will draw away the distrust that has come on you,—In that I will consent with you in the desert and accompany you on the Semâweh.—Then, if my promise has spoken you true, do ye renew my weal and prosper my fortune:—But if my mouth has lied to you, then rend my skin and pour out my blood.

Said Al Hârith, son of Hammâm: Then we were inspired to believe his vision and take as true what he had related;—So we ceased from disputing with him and cast lots for carrying him.—And at his word we cut the loops of hindrance, and put away fear of harm or

stay;—And when the pack saddles were fastened on and the setting forth was near, we sought to learn from him the magic words that we might make them a lasting safeguard.—He said: Let each of you repeat the Mother of the Koran as often as day or night comes on; —Then let him say with lowly tongue and humble voice, —O God! O thou who givest life to the mouldering dead! O thou who avertest harms! O thou who guardest from terrors! O thou generous in rewarding! O thou the refuge of suppliants! O thou the Lord of pardon and protection! Send thy blessing on Mohammed, the Seal of thy prophets, the Bringer of thy messages, and on the Lights of his kindred, the Keys of his victory;— And give me refuge, O God, from the mischiefs of devils and the assaults of princes; from the vexing of the wrongers, and from suffering through the tyrannous; from the enmity of transgressors, and from the transgression of enemies; from the conquest of conquerors, from the spoiling of spoilers, from the crafts of the crafty, from the treacheries of the treacherous;—And deliver me, O God, from the wrongfulness of neighbours and the neighbourhood of the wrongful;—And keep from me the hands of the harmful; bring me forth from the darkness of the oppressors; place me by thy mercy among thy servants who do aright.—O God, keep me in my own land and in my journeying, in my exile and my coming homeward, in my foraging and my return from it, in my trafficking and my success from it, in my adventuring and my withdrawing from it.—And guard me in myself and my property, in my honour and my goods, in my family and my means, in my household and my dwelling, in my strength and my fortune, in

my riches and my death.—Bring not on me reverse; make not the invader lord over me, but give me from thyself helping power.—O God, watch over me with thy eye and thy aid, distinguish me by thy safeguard and thy bounty, befriend me with thy election and thy good, and consign me not to the keeping of any but thee.—But grant to me health that weareth not away, and allot to me comfort that perisheth not; and free me from the terrors of misfortune, and shelter me with the coverings of thy boons; make not the talons of enemies to prevail against me, for thou art He that heareth prayer.

Then he looked down, and he turned not a glance, he answered not a word:—So that we said, "A fear has confounded him or a stupor struck him dumb."—Then he raised his head and drew his breath, and said, I swear by the heaven with its constellations, and the earth with its plains, and the pouring flood, and the blazing sun, and the sounding sea, and the wind and the dust-storm,—That this is the most sure of charms, one that will best suffice you for the wearers of the helmet.—He who repeats it at the smiling of the dawn has no alarm of danger to the red of eve;—And he who whispers it to the vanguard of the dark is safe the night long from plunder.

Said the narrator: So we learned it till we knew it thoroughly, and rehearsed it together that we might not forget it.—Then we set forth, urging the beasts by prayers, not by the song of drivers; and guarding the loads by words, not by warriors.—And our companion frequented us evening and morning, but required not of us our promises:—Till when we spied the house-tops of 'Ânah, he said to us, "Now, your help, your help!"—Then we set before him the exposed and the hidden, and

showed him the corded and the sealed.—And said to him, "Decide as thou wilt, for thou wilt find among us none but will consent."—But nothing enlivened him but the light, the adorning; nothing was comely in his eye but the coin.—So of those he loaded on his burden, and rose up with enough to repair his poverty.—Then he dodged us as dodges the cut-purse, and slipped away from us as slips quicksilver.—And his departure saddened us, his shooting away astonished us:—And we ceased not to seek him in every assembly, and to ask news of him from each that might mislead or guide.—Until it was said, "Since he entered ʿÂnah he has not quitted the tavern."—Then the foulness of this report set me on to test it, and to walk in a path to which I belonged not.—So I went by night to the wine-hall in disguised habit; and there was the old man in a gay-coloured dress amid casks and wine vats;—And about him were cup-bearers surpassing in beauty, and lights that glittered, and the myrtle and the jasmine, and the pipe and the lute.—And at one time he bade broach the wine casks, and at another he called the lutes to give utterance; and now he inhaled the perfumes, and now he courted the gazelles.—But when I had thus stumbled on his hypocrisy, and the differing of his to-day from his yesterday;—I said to him, Woe to thee, accursed! hast thou forgotten the day at the Jayrûn?—But he laughed heartily, and then indited charmingly:

I cling to journeying, I cross deserts, I loathe pride that I may cull joy:

And I plunge into floods, and tame steeds that I may draw the trains of pleasure and delight.

And I throw away staidness, and sell my land, for the sipping of wine, for the quaffing of cups.

And were it not for longing after the drinking of wine my mouth would not utter its elegancies;

Nor would my craft have lured the travellers to the land of Irak, through my carrying of rosaries.

Now be not angry, nor cry aloud, nor chide, for my excuse is plain:

And wonder not at an old man who settles himself in a well-filled house by a wine cask that is brimming.

For truly wine strengthens the bones and heals sickness and drives away grief.

And the purest of joy is when the grave man throws off the veils of shame and flings them aside:

And the sweetest of passion is when the love-crazed ceases from the concealing of his love, and shows it openly.

Then avow thy love and cool thy heart: or else the fire-staff of thy grief will rub a spark on it;

And heal thy wounds, and draw out thy cares by the daughter of the vine, her the desired:

And assign to thy evening draught a cup-bearer who will stir the torment of desire when she gazes;

And a singer who will raise such a voice that the mountains of iron shall thrill at it when she chants.

And rebel against the adviser who will not permit thee to approach a beauty when she consents.

And range in thy cunning even to perverseness; and care not what is said of thee, and catch what suits thee:

And leave thy father if he refuse thee, and spread thy nets and hunt who comes by thee.

But be sincere with thy friend, and avoid the niggardly, and bestow kindness, and be constant in gifts;

And take refuge in repentance before thy departure; for whoso knocks at the door of the Merciful causes it to open.

Then I said to him, "O rare thy recitation, but fie on thy misconduct!—Now, by Allah, tell me from what thicket is thy root, for thy puzzle vexes me."—He said I love not to disclose myself; yet I will intimate it:

I am the novelty of the time, the wonder of nations;

I am the wily one, who plays his wiles among Arabs and foreigners;

But not the less a brother of need, whom fortune vexes and wrongs,

And the father of children who lie out like meat on the tray:
Now the brother of want, who has a household, is not blamed if he be wily.

Said the narrator: Then I knew that it was Abû Zayd, the man of ill-fame and disgrace, he that blackens the face of his hoariness.—And the greatness of his contumacy offended me, and the foulness of the path of his resorting:—So I said to him with the tongue of indignation and the confidence of acquaintance: "Is it not time, old man, that thou withdraw from debauchery?"—But he was angry, and growled, and his countenance changed, and he thought a while:—And then he said, "It is a night for merriment, not for rebuke, an occasion for drinking wine, not for contention; so leave speaking thy thought until we meet to-morrow."—Then I left him, through fear of his drunken humour, not through dependence on his promise;—And I passed my night clothed in the mourning of repentance, at having advanced the steps of my foot to the daughter of the vine, not of grace.—And I made a vow to God Almighty that I would never again enter the tavern of a liquor-seller, even that I might be endowed with the dominion of Bagdad;—And that I would not look upon the vats of wine, even that the season of youth might be restored to me.—Then we saddled the white camels in the last darkness of night, and left together those two old ones, Abû Zayd and Iblîs.

THE THIRTEENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF BAGDAD."

This Assembly is remarkable for an enigmatical address, which is difficult to be understood, even by one acquainted with the original. Ḥârith is conversing with some poets, when an old woman, followed by some lean and feeble children, makes her appearance. She at once begins to solicit alms, and sets forth her former prosperity and her present distress in a composition the peculiarity of which is that she introduces into it the names of parts of the human body, each of which is to be taken, and is intelligible only when taken, in another sense. Thus the word ناظر which means *eye-ball*, means also *he who looks upon one with respect*, and must be understood in this second sense; the word حاجب has the meanings of *eye-brow* and *attendant*, the latter of which must be understood. The passage, though not much in accordance with European tastes, belongs to an order of composition which the Arabs, seduced by the extraordinary richness of their language, have much affected. The close of the address introduces, in an equally artificial manner, the names of colours. The old woman afterwards recites some charming verses, and obtains alms from the people. She is followed by Ḥârith, who discovers her to be Abû Zayd, the impostor, who, when alone, is heard to improvise some verses on his own cleverness.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was in company, on the banks of the Zowrâ, with some Shaykhs of the poets.—They were such that no rival would keep up even with their dust, no disputant would run with them in the training-ground.—And we flowed in a discourse that shamed the flowers, until we had halved the day.—Now, when the yield of our thoughts was failing, and our souls were desiring after their nests,—We caught sight of an old woman, who approached from afar, and trotted the trot of a good steed.—And she was leading behind her some children, thinner than spindles,

weaker than the young of doves.—And when she saw us, she failed not to make towards us;—And when she stood before us, she said: God save the faces present, though they are not of my acquaintance!—Know, O ye who are the refuge of the hoping, the stay of the widowed, that I am of the Princes of the tribes, the ladies that are kept jealously:—My people and my husband were wont to settle on the Breast, and to journey at the Heart, to burden the Back, to advance the Hand; but when Fortune destroyed the Arms, and pained the Liver by means of the Limbs; and turned about till Back was Belly; then the Eye-ball grew dim, and the Eye-brow restless, and the Eye went forth, and the Palm was lost, and the Fore-arm grew dry, and the Right hand broke, and the Elbows departed, and there remained to us neither Front tooth nor Eye tooth.—Now, since the Green life has become Dust-coloured, and the Yellow loved one has been Tarnished, my White day is made Black, and my Black temple is made White, so that the Blue-eyed enemy has pitied me, and now welcome the Red death![1] And there follow me those

[1] The explanation of this speech is as follows:—

My people and my husband were wont to sit in the first place in the assembly; to march at the centre, or head quarters of the army; they mounted their friends on the backs of their camels; they conferred favours: but when Fortune destroyed those who helped them, and afflicted them by taking away their children and servants, who laboured for them, and brought them gain; and when their state was completely overthrown; then, whoever looked to them with respect withdrew; and their attendants were insolent; and their coin left them; and their quiet was lost; and their fire-staff gave no spark; their power was broken; their comforts and conveniences were scattered; there remained not a camel, young or aged. Now, since the life of plenty has become barren, and the loved gold coin has turned aside from me, my happy day has been saddened,

of whom ye see that their look is a sufficient examining, that their yellowness is their interpreter:—The furthest desire of each is a mess, the extreme of his wish is a mantle.—Now I had sworn that I would not give my cheek to shame, except before the generous, even though I should die of misery.—But the soul that dwells in me has whispered me that succour will be found with you, and the discerning of my heart has announced to me that ye are the fountains of gifts.—Now may God brighten him who will make my vow sinless, and verify my observing;—And who will look on me with an eye into which parsimony sets a mote, while bounty plucks it out.

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now we were astonished at the excellence of her signifying and at the beauties of her metaphor.—So we said to her, "Thy prose has enchanted us, but how is thy versifying?"—She said, "Without a boast, it would make a rock to gush forth."—We said, "If thou wilt place us among thy Reciters, we will not be niggardly in imparting to thee."—She said, "I will first show you my worn out garment, and then give you to recite my poems."—Then she put forth the sleeve of a well worn smock, and unveiled the look of a crafty old woman, and indited:

I complain to God, with the complaining of the sick, against the trouble of the unjust, the hateful time.

O friends, I am of people who prospered long time, while the eyelid of fortune was cast down before them:

Their glory there was none to forbid, and their fame was spread abroad among men.

and the black hair of my temples has been whitened, so that the blue-eyed Greek, my enemy, has pitied me, and now welcome death in war.

When foraging failed in the ashy year they were a goodly meadow:

Their fires were kindled to the travellers, and they fed the guest with fresh meat:

Their neighbour passed not his night in hunger, nor through fear did he say, "Choking hinders me."

But the changes of destruction have made their seas of bounty to sink away from them, which I thought not would ever sink:

And put away from among them, into the bowels of the earth, those that were lions of guarding, healers of the sick.

That on which I carry is now my back, after being my beast, and my home is in the hollow, after being on the height.

My little ones fail not to mourn their misery, of which there is some flash every day.

When the pious man prays to his Lord by night, they also call Him with gushing tears.

O Thou who feedest the young raven in the nest, and settest the bone which is broken, and again broken;

Appoint to us, O God, one whose honour is pure and washed from the filth of blame;

Who will quench for us the fire of hunger, though only with a mess of the sour milk or the butter milk.

Now is there any who will remove what is come upon us, and make prize of thanks long and large?

For, by Him to whom the forelocks shall bow down in the day when the faces of the assemblage shall be black and white,

Were it not for these, my cheek would not expose itself, nor would I assay to the stringing of verse.

Said the narrator: Now, by Allah, she cleft our hearts in pieces with her verses, and called forth the gifts of our bosoms:—So that he gave her alms whose habit was to beg alms himself, and he was brisk to bestow on her who we thought would not be so.—And when her bosom was filled full with gold, and each of us had shown bounty to her,—She retreated, the little ones following her, and her mouth was wide with thanks.—But after she was gone, the company were all a-stretch to fathom her, that they might prove where their bounty had fallen.—And I went surety to them for eliciting the hinted secret, and

rose up and followed the track of the old woman.—Until she came to a street choked with people, exceeding in its crowd.—Then she plunged into the throng, and slipped away from the simple children.—And she turned aside, with unconcern of mind, to a ruined mosque, and threw away her cloak, and drew off her veil.—But I spied at her through a chink of the door, and watched what strange thing she would bring to pass.—And when the gear of modesty fell off, I saw the face of Abû Zayd dawn out.—And I thought within myself that I would rush upon him and rebuke him for the course he was running.—But he threw himself back with the gesture of the contumacious, and raised the shrill note of singers, and broke forth, inditing thus:—

Oh! would I knew whether the time had gotten a knowledge of my power:
Whether it had learnt or learnt not the real truth how deep I go in deceiving:
How many of its sons I have won of by my wile and my fraud:
How oft I have sallied forth upon them in my known form and in disguise;
To catch one set by preaching, and others by poetry;
To excite one mind by vinegar, and another by wine;
Being at one time Ṣakhr, at another time the sister of Ṣakhr.
Now if I had followed the frequented path all the length of my life,
My fire and my portion would have failed, my need and my loss would have lasted.
So say to him who blames, "This is my excuse—take it."

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now when the clearness of his case appeared to me, and the marvel of his wickedness, and the excuse which he had tinseled in his verses,—I knew that his devil was a rebellious one, who would not listen to rebuke, and would do nought but what he willed.—So I turned my reins to my

companions, and published to them what my eye-witnessing had established.—Then they were sullen at the loss of their presents, and vowed one to another to deny old women.

THE FOURTEENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF MECCA."

This Assembly has little that is remarkable. Ḥârith is on the pilgrimage to Mecca, and, after having fulfilled the usual rites, he and his friends are diverting themselves with conversation, in a tent, during the heat of the day. An old man and a boy make their appearance, and when they are asked what they want, the old man utters a complimentary speech, soliciting relief for himself and his son. They promise it, and he then recites some verses, lamenting that his camel had broken down, and that he should have to return from the pilgrimage on foot. They promise him a camel, and desire to know what is his son's request. The boy recites some verses, asking for various kinds of food in use among the ancient Arabs. Both receive what they desire from the company, and Ḥârith then asks whence they come. The old man, who is Abû Zayd, begins to tell them in verse of Serûj, and its destruction; but his tears hinder him from proceeding, and he departs abruptly. In this Assembly Abû Zayd and his son are not represented as practising any kind of knavery; and it may be assumed that they were really in want of a beast and food. This trait is in keeping with the thirty-first Assembly, which introduces Abû Zayd on the pilgrimage preaching to the assembled people. On that occasion he would not ask or even take alms, having made a vow of self-denial. In the present Assembly, though less strict, he will not commit an unworthy action in a sacred place. The lingering religious sentiment and sense of honour in Abû Zayd's character are always well observed by the author.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I rose up from the City of Peace for the pilgrimage of Islam:—And when, by the help of God, I had fulfilled my squalor and permitted myself perfumes and indulgence, there

came upon the encampment of the Khayf the blaze of summer;—And I made a shelter perforce of what might ward off the mid-day heat.—Now when I was under a leather tent with a company of the polite; and the furnace of the gravel was now hot, and the noon blinded the eye of the chameleon;—Lo! there broke in upon us a tottering old man, whom followed a youth in agile prime.—And the old man greeted with the greeting of the well-bred, the intelligent, and answered with the answering of a kinsman, not a stranger.—Then he pleased us by what he scattered from his chaplet, and we wondered at his unreserve before we had emboldened him.—And we said to him, "What art thou? and how hast thou made way in, and not asked leave?"—He said, "As for me, I am a suppliant, a seeker of help; the secret of my misery is not hidden, and a look at me is my sufficient intercessor:—And as for my intrusion, to which suspicion clings, why, it is not wonderful, seeing there can be no veil over the generous."—Then we asked him how he found his way to us, and by what he got direction towards us.—He said, "Truly generosity has a fragrance whose breathings steal forth, whose odours guide to its meadow;—And I was led by the exhaling of your perfume to the brightening of your bounty;—And the fragrant waving of your myrtle told me gladdeningly that the return from your presence would be happy."—Then we asked him concerning his want, that we might undertake to aid him.—He said, "I have a need and my boy a request."—We said, "Either wish shall be fulfilled, and each of you shall surely be contented:—But the elder, the elder:" He said, "Certainly; by Him who has spread out the seven earths."—Then he

leaped up to speak like the camel loosed from the foot-rope, and recited;

I am a man whose beast has fallen with soreness of foot and weariness;
My distance is a far one, my pace is unequal to it:
With me is not as much as a mustard seed of the stamped gold:
My contriving is closed up, my bewilderment plays with me.
If I set out on foot, I fear destructive haps;
And if I lag behind the company my way is straitened.
My sighing is on the heights, my tear is on the slopes.
But ye are the foraging ground of him that hopes, the target of seeking;
Your grist pours down as pour not down the clouds:
Your neighbour dwells in sanctuary, but your wealth is open to spoiling:
The terror-stricken does not take shelter with you, and then fear the tooth of calamities;
Nor does he that hopes seek the milk-flow of your gifts, and then fail to be gifted.
So now be ye moved by my story, and prosper my retiring from you;
For if ye had made trial of my life, in its meat and its drink,
Surely such distress as mine would pain you, distress that gives me up to sorrows.
And if ye were to learn my distinction, and my pedigree, and my path,
And what my knowledge embraces of choice studies,
No doubt would occur to you but that my breeding is my malady.
Now, would that I had not sucked at the breast of scholarship!
For its ill-luck has fallen on me; and in this thing was my father unduteous to me.

Then we said to him: "As for thee, thy verses have now disclosed thy poverty, and the perishing of thy she-camel;—So we will mount thee on that which will bring thee to thy city; and, now, what is the need of thy son?" —He said to him, "Rise, my boy, as thy father rose, and speak what is in thy mind; may thy mouth not be harmed!"—Then he rose up as rises the hero to the sally-

ing forth, and unsheathed a tongue like a cutting blade, and recited:

O ye Lords, whose dwellings are built up on high places!
Who, when danger befalls, take stand to ward off stratagem;
To whom is easy the bestowing of stored up treasures;
I desire of you a piece of roast, and a loaf, and a pudding:
But if that be too dear, then let it be cracknels, in which shall be hidden some roast lamb;
Or if there be neither this nor that, then my fill of tharîd:
But if these deny themselves altogether, then mere dates with their sauce.
Bring forth what is easy for you, even though it be but shreddings of dried meat;
And make it ready quickly, for my soul is longing for what is ready.
For there is no doing without provision for my far journey;
And ye are the best of kindred to be called on in necessity;
Your hands every day are full of new bounties;
Your palms bestow all useful gifts.
Now my wish will limit itself within the folds of that which ye shall give.
Through me may reward be gotten; and estimable is the consequence of relieving my sorrow;
And mine are young offsprings of the wit which put to shame every poem.

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now when we saw that the cub was like the lion, we mounted the father and provisioned the son;—And they requited the kindness with thanks, which they spread out as robes, and they paid for it its due.—And when they were intent on departure, and had fastened for the journey the waist-folds of the skirt,—I said to the old man, "Has our promise been like the promise of 'Orḳûb, or does there remain a need in the mind of Jacob?"—He said, "God forbid! surely not: nay, your kindness has been mighty and manifest."—I said to him, "Reward us as we have rewarded thee, profit us as we have profited thee!—

Where is thy cot? for perplexity has possessed us concerning thee."—Then he sighed with the sighing of one who calls to mind his home, and recited, while sobbing hindered his tongue:

Serûj is my dwelling; but how to make way to it!
For enemies have encamped in it, and marred it.
Now by the House to which I have journeyed to lay down my sins in it,
Nought has pleased my eye since I have left the bounds of Serûj.

Then his eyes were drowned with tears, and his tear-founts permitted their flowing:—And he was unwilling to let them drop, but he could not restrain them.—So he cut short his sweet reciting, and was brief in his farewell and withdrew.

THE FIFTEENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "THE LEGAL."

This long and elaborate composition has a very slight foundation. The author, desirous to amuse his readers with a very ordinary legal puzzle, imagines a long adventure to introduce it. Hârith is passing a sleepless night, and strongly desires a companion to converse with, when a wanderer knocks at the door. He opens, and when the light is brought he discovers the visitor to be Abû Zayd. Rejoicing at so pleasant an encounter he offers him food, but finds that Abû Zayd will eat nothing. He is offended; but Abû Zayd proceeds to explain his want of appetite by relating the adventures of the day. He had been as usual in destitution, and his hunger had been further excited by the sight of the dates and milk that were exposed in the market. At last, when almost exhausted, he had seen a man weeping. He had inquired the cause and found that the stranger was deploring the decay of learning, inasmuch as no one was able to solve for him a puzzle which had come into his possession. This was to explain how a man, dying childless, could leave a brother perfectly competent to inherit, and yet that his property should go to his wife's brother. Abû Zayd at once perceives the

answer, but demands a supper before revealing it. The stranger takes him home and treats him to dates and cream, which he eats greedily, and then explains that the deceased man in the puzzle had had a son by a former wife, who had married the mother of his, the father's, second wife and then died, leaving a son who would be the brother of the second wife, and the grandson of the deceased whose property was in question. This child would therefore inherit in preference to the deceased's brother. Abû Zayd relates that when he had given the stranger the solution of the puzzle, he had been turned out in the rain, and had wandered from house to house seeking shelter, until chance had taken him to Ḥârith. They spend the night in conversation, and Ḥârith parts with him in the morning with regret. Sherîshi, in his commentary, remarks with justice on the inordinate length of this Assembly, and gives one by Al Hamadâni, of only a few lines, as a contrast to it, observing that if Ḥarîri's had been shorter and Badî' az Zemân's longer, both would have been better. "Abû Moḥammed," he says, "is so long as to weary the hearer."

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was wakeful in a certain night, that was black of robe, lowering a massive cloud, beyond the wakefulness of the lover who is driven from the door, who is tried by the aversion of mistresses.—And thoughts ceased not to rouse my sadness, and make my imagination roam among fantasies.—Until I formed a wish, through the unease of what I suffered, that I might be granted a talk-fellow from among the estimable, who should shorten the tedium of my night-dark night.—Now my wish was not ended, and I had not closed my eye, when a knocker knocked at the door, one with an humble voice.—And I said within myself, "Perchance the plant of wishing has now borne fruit, and the night of luck is moonlit."—And I rose up to him in haste, and said, "Who is it that now walks by night?"—He said, "A stranger, whom the night has veiled in darkness, whom the rain-flood has caught;—And he desires a sheltering, nothing else; and when it dawns

he will advance his journey."—Said Al Ḥârith: Now when his rays indicated his sun, and his title disclosed the secret of his page,—I knew that night-talking with him would be a prize, and watching with him a pleasure. —So I opened the door with smiling, and said, "Enter ye into them with peace."—And there entered a person whose lance time had bent, and the rain had wet through his mantle.—And he greeted with a glib tongue, and a sweet eloquence.—Then he thanked me for responding to his voice, and excused himself for night-walking out of season.—But I put near to him the kindled lantern, and contemplated him as one that examines money.— And I found that he was our Shaykh Abû Zayd, without question, without the guess of doubt.—So I received him as one who had possessed me of my utmost desire, and transported me from the vexing of sorrow to the quiet of joy.—Then he took to complaining of weariness, and I took to How? and Where?—He said, "Let me swallow down my spittle, for my road has wearied me."—And I thought that he had hunger in his belly, and was sluggish from this cause.—So I set before him what is set before the guest who comes sudden in the dark night.— But he shrank as shrinks the abashed, and declined as declines the overeaten.—And I was evil in thought at his refraining, and the change of his nature angered me:—Until I was near to be rough to him in speech, and to sting him with the venom of blame.—Then he discerned from the glances of my eye what pervaded my mind:—And he said, "O weak of confidence in them that love thee! turn from that which thou makest to stir thy heart and listen to me, O thou base-born!"—I said, "Go on, brother of empty talk."—Then he said,

Know that I passed yesternight an ally of want, a communer with fantasy.—And when the night had fulfilled its vow, and the morn had sunk its stars, I went forth at the time of sunrise to one of the markets,—To assay against any prey that might pass by, any generous man who might show bounty.—And I caught sight of dates whose ordering in rows was made comely, whose place of summering had been favourable.—And they united in proof of their goodness the purity of choice wine, and the ruddiness of cornelian.—And opposite them was milk that showed forth like the yellow gold, and disclosed a saffron hue,—Which praised him who cooked it with the tongue of its perfection, and justified the judgment of the buyer, even though he had paid down his heart's core for it.—Then appetite bound me with its cords, and thirst brought me under its dominion.—And I remained more bewildered than a lizard, more distracted than a lover;—Having no means to bring me to the reaching of my wish, and the delight of swallowing.—And now my foot obeyed me not for departure through the ardour of my inflaming.—But greediness and its violence chid me on, and hunger and its heat, to forage every land, to be content with a driblet from my watering.—And I ceased not all the length of that day to let down my bucket into rivers;—But it came not back even with a wetting, and drew not up a quenching for my thirst;—Until the sun bent to the setting, and my soul was weak with weariness.—Then at eve I went homeward with burning stomach: I returned irresolute, advancing one foot, drawing back the other.—And while I thus sped or stayed, while my breeze thus rose or fell, behold, there met me a Shaykh, who was lamenting with

the lamentation of the bereaved, and his eyes were flowing.—Then not even the Wolf's Disease that I was under, and the emptiness that melted me, engaged me from the attempt to become intimate with him, and from the desire after deceiving him.—So I said to him, "O stranger, in thy weeping there is surely a secret, and behind thy passion an ill:—So shew me thy disorder and take me among thy counsellors:—For thou wilt find in me a physician to cure or a helper to impart."—Then he said, "By Allah! my lamenting is not after livelihood that is gone, or fortune that is insolent;—But for the perishing of science and its blotting out, for the going down of its moons and its suns."—I said, "And what mishap has appeared? what question is obscure? so as to excite in thee grief for the loss of those who are gone."—Then he drew forth a scrap of paper from his sleeve, and swore by his father and mother,—That he had already laid it before the chiefs of the schools, but they could not distinguish its worn-out way-marks,—And had bidden the doctors of the ink-flasks to speak on it, but they were dumb beyond the dumbness of the tenants of the tombs.—I said to him, "Let me see it; for perhaps I shall suffice for it."—He said, "Thou art not extreme in thy request, and oft a shot is without a shooter."—Then he handed it to me, and lo! there was written on it:

Ho the learned, the lawyer, who surpassest in acuteness, and there is none like thee!

Give me a decision on a case which every judge shuns, at which every lawyer is bewildered:

A man died, leaving a brother, both by father and mother, who was a Moslem, free, pious;

And the deceased had a wife who had, O Doctor, a brother, really her own, without equivocation;

She got her legal share, and her brother took what was left of the inheritance instead of the deceased's brother.

Now relieve us by thy answer to what we ask; this is an ordinance of law, no fault can be found in it.

Now when I had read the verses on the paper and perceived their secret, I said to him, "Thou hast fallen on one who is knowing in it, thou hast alighted near one who is at home in it:—But yet I am burning in the entrails and have need of a supper; so grant me to sojourn with thee, then listen to my decision."—He said, "Thou art just in thy stipulating and hast shrunk from excess;—So go with me to my dwelling, that thou mayest get what thou desirest and come off as is fitting."—Said Abû Zayd: Then I accompanied him to his habitation as God hath commanded.—And he brought me into a house narrower than the ark of Moses, weaker than a spider's web.—But not the less did he mend the straitness of his dwelling by the largeness of his bestowal:—For he gave me my choice of the entertainment and of all the delicacies that are bought.—And I said, "I wish for the proud rider on the desired steed, and for the wholesome companion with the hurtful one that is companied with."—So he thought a long time, and then he said, "Perchance thou meanest the daughter of the palm-tree with the first milk that follows the kid."—I said to him, "Just these two I meant, and for their sake I trouble myself."—And he rose cheerful, then sat down angry: and said, "God prosper thee! Know that truth is nobility, but lying a pest;—Nor let hunger, which is the garment of the prophets and the ornament of the saints, carry thee to join thyself to him who lies, or to put on the nature of him who swerves from faith-keeping.—For

the free-born woman hungers, but will not eat by her breasts; and she holds back from baseness even though urged to it by need.—Besides, I am no simpleton for thee, nor one to wink at a dupe's bargain;—So come! I warn thee before the veil be rent, and the feud established between us;—And neglect not attention to my warning, and beware false speaking with me, beware!" —I said to him, "Now, by Him who has forbidden the eating of usury, but allowed the eating of milk, I have not spoken with falsehood, I have not shown thee deceitfully.—Thou shalt prove the truth of the business, and approve the giving of the milk and dates."—Then he was cheerful with the cheerfulness of one who is dealt with truly, and went off hastening to the market. —And nothing could be speedier than his return, bending under them; and his face was frowning, and he set them before me as one who would upbraid me;—And said, "Press host on host; so enjoy the delight of life." —Said Abû Zayd, Then I bared a glutton's arm, and charged as charges the voracious elephant;—But he, he glanced at me as glances the spiteful, and in his rage he would that I had choked.—Now when I had gulped down* either kind, and left them a trace after the substance, I was speechless through perplexity at the coming on of night-time, and through thinking on the answer to the verses.—And he delayed not to rise and set before me the ink-flask and pens.—And he said, "Thou hast filled thy wallet, now dictate the answer.—Otherwise, prepare, if thou shirk, to own the debt for what thou hast eaten."—I said to him, There is nothing but earnest with me, so write (and the prospering be from God):

Say to him who riddles questions that I am the discloser of their secret which he hides.

Know that the deceased, in whose case the law preferred the brother of his spouse to the son of his father,

Was a man who, of his free consent, gave his son in marriage to his own mother-in-law; nothing strange in it.

Then the son died, but she was already pregnant by him, and gave birth to a son like him;

And he was the son's son without dispute, and brother of the grandfather's spouse without equivocation.

But the son of the true-born son is nearer to the grandfather, and takes precedence in the inheritance over the brother;

And therefore, when he died, the eighth of the inheritance was adjudged to the wife for her to take possession;

And the grandson, who was really her brother by her mother, took the rest;

And the full brother was left out of the inheritance, and we say thou hast only to bewail him.

This is my decision which every judge who judges will pattern by, every lawyer.

Said Abû Zayd: Now when he had understood the answer and verified its correctness, he said to me, "Remember thy family and the night, so gather up thy skirt and be beforehand with the rain-flood."—I said, "I am in the house of exile, and in sheltering me lies the best of offering,—Especially as the van of the darkness has now drooped, and the thunder is lauding God in the cloud."—He said, "Be off (may God keep thee) whither thou wilt; but desire not to pass the night here."—I said, "Why is that, seeing the emptiness of thy habitation?"—He said, "Because I looked well how thou didst swallow what was before thee, until thou didst leave and let alone nothing;—And I saw that thou dost not look to thy well-being, nor take care for the keeping of thy health.—Now, he that exceeds in what thou hast exceeded, and fills his belly as thou hast filled it, escapes

not a weakening surfeit or a killing cholera.—So, by Allah, leave me alone and go forth from me while thou art still kept from harm;—For by Him who gives life and death there is no lodging for thee in my house."—Now, when I had heard his oath, and made proving of him, I went forth from his house perforce, and with a victualling of sadness:—And the sky rained upon me, and the darkness made me to stumble, and the dogs barked after me, and the doors repulsed me,—Until the kindness of fate sent me to thee, and thanks to its white hand.

Then I said to him, "Charming is this ordained meeting with thee to my glad heart."—And he began to be diverse in his stories, and to mix the laughable with the mournful; until the first of the morning dawned, and the caller of "Blessing" made his cry.—Whereupon he made ready to respond to the caller, and then turned to bid me farewell.—But I checked him from departure and said, "Hospitality is three days."—But he adjured God, and restricted himself by a vow; then he sought the outlet, and indited as he lingered:

Visit him thou lovest in each month only a day, and exceed not that upon him;
For the beholding of the new moon is but one day in the month, and afterward eyes look not on it.

Said Al Hârith, son of Hammâm: Then I took leave of him with a heart bleeding of its wound, and wished that my night had been tardy of its morn.

THE SIXTEENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF THE WEST."

The purpose of this Assembly is to exhibit Abû Zayd in the performance of an extraordinary feat of scholarship, the recitation of some lines of poetry, each of which may be read forwards or backwards without change of sense. Ḥârith meets with four scholars in a mosque and takes seat with them. The conversation falls upon sentences which preserve their identity when reversed; and some one proposes that they should try their powers of composing them. This is agreed to, and the first man produces a sentence of three words, the next a sentence of four, the next a sentence of five, the next a sentence of six. It then comes to the turn of Ḥârith to compose a sentence of seven words, which shall be the same whether read forwards or backwards. This he is unable to do; but an old man who had joined them not only performs the feat, but actually improvises five lines of poetry, each of which has the same extraordinary property. Of course this is Abû Zayd, and when Ḥârith discovers him, he introduces him to his friends, who invite him to spend the night with them in conversation. He pleads that his hungry children are expecting him; but assures them that if they will let him go and give them a meal he will return forthwith. They accede to this, and send a servant with him to carry his wallet. After some time the servant comes back alone, and relates that Abû Zayd had refused to return, and had dismissed him with some moral verses.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was present at the prayer of sunset in one of the mosques of the West:—And when I had performed it with completeness and joined to it what was optional, my eye fell on a company who had set themselves down aside and had drawn apart, friends pure in friendship;—And they were taking from each other the cup of talk and rubbing the fire-staves of discussion.—And I desired to converse with them for the sake of some maxim that might be acquired, or of scholarship that might be gotten in increase;—So

I advanced to them as one who would play Tofayl upon them,—And said to them, "Will ye receive a comer who seeks to gather of night-talkings, and seeks not the newly-gathered of fruits; and who desires the beauties of dialogue, not the choice of the young camel's hump?" —Then they loosed their loops to me, and said, "Welcome, Welcome!"—And I had not sat longer than the flash of the blinding lightning or the sip of the timid bird, when there came upon us a wanderer; on his shoulder was a wallet;—And he greeted us with the two words, and he greeted the mosque with the two salutations;—And he said, "O ye men of understanding and choice excellence!—Know ye not that the most precious of offerings is the relieving of sorrows, and the firmest cord of salvation is the imparting to those who have need?—Now, by Him who hath set me down in your precinct, and destined to me the asking alms of you, truly I am the stray of a distant abode, the messenger of lank-bellied children;—And is there in the company any that will cool down for us the heat of hunger?"— Then they said to him, "O stranger, thou hast come after the even-tide, and there remained over only the leavings of our supper.—But if thou art content with these thou wilt find among us none to forbid thee."—He said, "Surely the brother of afflictions, he is content with the scraps of tables and the shakings of provision bags."—Then each of them bade his servant to victual him with what he had.—And the kindness pleased him and he thanked for it, and took seat and watched what was brought him.—And we, we returned to mooting the beauties of scholarship and its choice points, and drawing forth its rill from its founts,—Until we engaged in the

subject of language which does not become absurd by being reversed, as the phrase ساكبُ كأس (the pourer out of the cup).—Then we challenged each other that we should make our thoughts yield an offspring in it, that we should originate virgin phrases in it,—On the condition that he who began should string three beads on his necklace, and that the additions should advance by degrees after him;—So that the man on his right should place four in his series, and his neighbour of the left should place seven perforce.

Said the narrator: And we were ranged to the number of the hand's fingers, and we were set together with the union of the men of the Cave.—Then to the greatness of my vexation, hastened he on my right, and said: لُم اخًا ملّ, (Blame him who wearies of thee).—And the one on his right said: كبّر رَجاءَ أجر ربّك, (Make great thy hope of the recompense of thy Lord).—Said he who was next: مَن يَرُبُّ اذا برّ يُنمُ, (He who completes the kindness which he renders, gains increase.)—Said the last: سَكتّ كُلّ مَنْ نمّ لكَ تَكِس, (Silence every one who blabs to thee, and thou wilt be wise.)—Then the turn came to me, and to string a seven-beaded thread was incumbent on me.—And my thought ceased not to mould and break, to be fertile and barren; and all the while I seek food and find none to feed me;—Until my breeze fell, and my submission was manifest.—And I said to my companions "If the Serûji were present here, he would heal this cureless malady."—They said, "If this came before Iyâs he would certainly stop in despair."—Then began we to be profuse in declaring that it was hard, and that its door was shut.—But that visitor who had come upon us glanced at us with the glance of the contemptuous; and

he was joining pearls together, and we knew it not.—And when he had noticed our ignominy, and the drying up of our pool, he said "O people! truly a great trouble is it to make the barren bring forth, or to get a cure by the sick; and 'there is One learned above all the learned.'"—Then he turned to me and said, I will take thy place, and free thee from what has fallen on thee:—Now if thou desire to speak in prose, and yet not to trip, say, addressing him who blames avarice, and is large in his reproach, لُذ بِكُلِّ مُؤَمَّلٍ اذا لمّ ومَلَكَ بَذَلَ, (Take refuge with every trusty patron, who, when he has collected and possesses, gives freely).—But if thou prefer to versify, say to him whom thou esteemest:

Bestow on the needy when he comes to thee, and show regard even when a man injures thee.

Have dealings with him that is noble, but put afar from thee the base.

Withdraw from the side of the unjust, the mischievous, when he sits by thee.

When contention rouses itself put it off from thee, and cast it away when it confirms itself.

Be still, and thou shalt grow strong; for it may be that time that was perverse to thee shall aid thee.

Said Al Ḥârith: Now when he had bewitched us with his verses, and fatigued us by the remoteness of his goals—We praised him until he begged to be spared, and we gave to him until he said it was enough.—Then he gathered up his garment, and loaded on his wallet, and rose to go, reciting:

Excellent are this company, who are true of speech, princes in bounty.

They surpass mankind in far-famed virtues, they surpass them in their gifts.

I have talked with them, and found that Saḥbân in their presence would be as Bâḳil:

And I alighted among them begging, and met with a rain that poured.
I swear that if the generous are a shower they are a flood.

Then he stepped two lances' space, but returned commending himself to God from death,—And said, "O strength of him that is without kindred, treasure of him that is reft of wealth!—The glooming has now set in, and the face of the highway is veiled;—And between me and my house is the dark night and a razed out path.—And have ye a lantern that will secure me from stumbling, and make plain the tracks?"—Said Al Hârith: And when there was brought what was sought for, and the light of the brand disclosed men's faces,—I saw that he who hunted us was our Abû Zayd; and I said to my friends, "This is he of whom I indicated that when he speaks he hits the point, and when he is asked for rain he pours."—And they stretched towards him their necks, and they made the blacks of their eyes surround him.—And they begged him that he would pass his night in talk with them, on the condition that they should mend his poverty.—He said, "My desire is yours! Welcome to you since ye have welcomed!—Nevertheless when I came to you my children were writhing with hunger, and calling to me for a quick return.—And if they find me tardy, distraction will possess them, and my life will be no more serene.—Now suffer me to go that I may fill their emptiness, and relieve their choke; then return to you straightway, prepared for night-talking till the dawn."—So we said to one of the lads, "Follow him to his people, that he may be the quicker to come again."—And the boy set out with him, carrying his wallet under his arm, hastening

his return:—But he delayed a delay exceeding bounds; then the lad came back alone.—We said to him, "What story hast thou of the knave?"—He said: He took me along wearying ways and branching paths, until we came to a ruined hut.—Then he said, "Here is my station, the nest of my chicks."—And he bade open to him the door, and he pulled away from me his wallet, and said, "By my life! thou hast lightened a load off me, and deserved fair treatment from me.—Now here is a counsel for thee which is among the most precious of counsels, the seed-plots of advantages;" then he recited:

When thou hast got the plucking of the palm, defer it not to the coming year:

And if thou lightest on a treading-floor, fill thy crop with the ears that are there;

And stay not when thou hast picked them up, lest thou stick in the net of the snarer;

And go not far in when thou swimmest, for safety is on the bank.

Accost with "Give now," and answer with "Bye and bye;" and sell what is postponed from thee for what comes at once.

And exceed not upon a friend in thy visiting, for no one was ever wearied of save the clinging guest.

Then he said, "Treasure these lines in thy heart, and follow them in thy conduct.—And now hasten to thy fellows in the keeping of thy Lord;—And when thou hast reached them, bring them my greeting, and rehearse to them my commandment.—And say to them from me that full sure night-watching spent in tales is among the greatest of harms; and that I fail not to care for myself, nor will bring dryness into my head by vigils."—Said the narrator: Now when the argument of his poem had put us in view of his cunning and fraud, we upbraided each other for leaving him, and for deceiving ourselves with his lie.—Then we separated with frowning faces and a losing bargain.

THE SEVENTEENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "THE REVERSED."

This Assembly closely resembles the last; the difference between them being that, whereas the feat accomplished in the last consisted in producing sentences or lines of poetry, the letters of which should be the same whether read forward or backward, the peculiarity of the present composition is that the words themselves being reversed produce a perfect sense. The Assembly, in other respects, shows no feature that requires notice.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: In one of the places whither my journeying cast me, to whose fairness my eye was lifted up, I beheld some youths, on whom was the mark of understanding, and the beauty of the stars of the dark.—And they were in a debate that was strong of blast, and a contention that exceeded in its heat.—Then was I roused to make towards them by the love of disputation, and by deeming the fruits of discussion to be sweet.—And when I had joined myself to their company, and strung myself on their thread, they said, "Art thou one who will prove himself in the strife and cast in his bucket among the buckets?"—I said, "Nay, I am but of the lookers on at war, not of the sons of the stab and the stroke."—Then they broke off from arguing with me, and gave themselves to putting forth riddles.—And there was in the midst of their ring, and in the circlet of their company, an old man whom cares had made lean, whom the hot wind had scorched;—So that he had come to be thinner than a reed, dryer than the shears.—And yet was he uttering wonders whenever he answered, and causing Saḥbân

to be forgotten as often as he expounded.—And I admired the judgment he was gifted with, and his surpassing that assemblage.—And he ceased not to make clear every puzzle, and to lay low all he aimed at, until the quivers were empty, and the asking and the answering were exhausted.—Now when he saw that the company had consumed their store, and were forced to fasting, he hinted at a colloquy, and asked leave for an argument.—They said, "Excellent, but who will be our surety for it?"—He said, "Do ye know a composition whose earth is its heaven, and whose morn is its even; which is woven on two beams, and shows with two colours, and prays towards two points, and goes forth with two faces?—If it rises out from its east excellent is its splendour, and if it mounts from its west, then Oh its marvel!"

Said Al Ḥârith: Then it was as though the company were struck with speechlessness, or the word "Silence" were incumbent upon them.—And no man said word, and the tongue of none uttered aught;—But when he saw them dumb as cattle, and speechless as statues, he said to them, "I have now conceded to you the term of grace, and made slack to you the tether of delay:—And here is the camp of gathering, the station of decision.—Now if your minds yield freely I will praise, but if your fire-staves be barren I will rub the spark."—They said to him, "By Allah, there is no swimming for us in the deep of this sea, no wandering on its shore; so give rest to our thoughts from travail, and make grateful thy gift by readiness.—And take us as brethren who will leap when thou leapest, and will recompense when thou seekest recompensing."—And he looked down a

space; then he said, I hear you and obey.—Take now this dictation from me and hand it down of me:

Man is the creature of kindness; and the perfecting of a benefit is the deed of the liberal; and the disposition of the generous is a treasure of praise; and the gain of thanks is a gathering of happiness; and the index of generosity is the light of cheerfulness; and the practice of courtesy leads of needs to affection; and the bond of friendship demands sincere counsel; and truth of narrative is the ornament of the tongue; and eloquence in speech is witchcraft to hearts; and the net of desire is the bane of souls; and impatience of disposition is a dishonour to mortals; and evil desire consists not with self-restraint; and the clinging to prudence is the leading-cord of safety; and to seek occasions for blaming is the worst of faults; and the dwelling upon failings overthrows friendships; and sincerity of purpose is the cream of a gift; and ungrudgingness in conferring is the price due to asking; and the undertaking of labours lays the way for recompence; and faith in God's protection makes it easy to bestow; and the excellence of the prince is largeness of breast; and the ornament of rulers is hatred of defamers; and the reward of praiseworthy deeds is a bestowing of gifts; and the dowry of conciliation is the obtaining of requests; and the cause of error is extravagance of aim; and to overstep bounds blunts vigour; and transgression of politeness nullifies services; and the forgetting of rights provokes resistance; and to shun doubtful deeds raises men's rank; and elevation of dignities is by rushing into dangers; and the exalting of positions is by the favour of Providence;

and loftiness in actions is through the limiting of desires; and the lengthening of thought makes precision of judgment; and the crown of princeliness is the refinement of courtliness; and by contentiousness is lost what is sought for; and in perils is shown the difference among men; and in the superiority of plans lies the distinction of men's values; and by the exaggeration of the envoy policy is weakened; and through laxness of powers do terrors appear; and by the task of patience is the fruit of victory; and the merit to be praiseworthy is in proportion to diligence; and to repay regard is necessary to consideration; and affection in servants is shown in visiting their masters; and the adornment of manliness is the guarding of trusts; and the proving of brethren is in their lightening one's griefs; and the repulse of enemies is by defence on the part of friends; and the testing of the intelligent is by associating them with the ignorant; and the looking to consequences gives security from fatalities; and the keeping from baseness spreads reputation; and the vice of boorishness consists not with excellence; and the essence of the noble is the guarding of secrets.

Then he said: These are two hundred words comprising culture and admonition.—If one move them in this direction, there is no debate, no contention; but if one desire the reversing of their mould, and the turning of them backwards, let him say, "Secrets are trusted to the noble; and the nature of excellence consists not with boorishness; and foulness of reputation spreads disgrace;"—And so on this track let him trail them and not fear error in them, until there shall come the close of their couplets and the last of their

pearls, namely, "and to perfect kindness is a good deed of man."

Said the narrator: Now when he had uttered his unique address, and his elegancy that was perfect of meaning, we knew how much composition may be diverse in merit, and that excellence is in the hand of God; He gives it to whom he will.—Then clung each of us to his skirt, each cut off for him a portion from what he possessed.—But he declined to receive mine, and said, "I do not take forfeit of my pupils."—I said, "Be Abû Zayd, even with all this embrowning of thy figure and this failure of the water of thy cheek."—He said, "I am he, even with all my leanness and withering, and the squalor of my drought."—Then I took to chiding him for this gadding east and west.—But he declared the Power of God and our return to Him; then he indited with an aching heart:

Time hath drawn his sword upon me to fright me, and hath sharpened his blade;

And hath stolen away from mine eyelid its slumber, like an adversary; and hath made its tear flow down;

And caused me to roam the world; to go about its east, to traverse its west:

And day after day there is for me in each valley but a single rising and setting.

And so the exile's figure is changed and his destination is afar.

Then he went away trailing his gait and swinging his arms;—And we were divided between turning to gaze on him and hastening after him.—Then we delayed not to loose our loops, and we went asunder like the bands of Saba.

The following is Abû Zayd's composition read backwards: Secrets are trusted to the noble; and the

nature of excellence consists not with boorishness; and foulness of reputation spreads disgrace; and the guarding against fatalities secures from ill consequences; and the discerning of the foolish is by associating them with the intelligent; and the proving of friends is in the repelling of enemies; and the driving away of sorrows is by the cheering of brethren; and the proof of religious beliefs is in the observance of virtue; and the grace of subjects is the visiting their masters; and sincerity of regard consists in the repaying of consideration; and the necessity of exertion is in proportion to reputation; and the meriting of success is the fruit of patience; and in the duress of terrors is strength shown; and by looseness of policy the envoy is weakened; and through increase of rank do purposes differ; and according to the eminence of men is the magnitude of their perils; and in poverty contention is useless; and with courtliness comes the refinement of rule; and the first thing in knowledge is clearness of thought; and to defer men's hopes is a failure in duties; and loftiness of authority is by the favour of Providence; and exaltation in dignities is by rushing into dangers; and the raising of rank raises distrusts; and the shunning of contumacy produces regard for rights; and forgetfulness of services destroys courtesy; and to overstep bounds blunts vigour; and to go beyond the mark is an excess of error; and the obtaining of requests is by the interceding of conciliation; and the dowry of givers is the spreading of their praiseworthy deeds; and the reward of administrators is the hatred of rulers; and the ornament of the prince is largeness of breast; and the virtue of bestowing brings with it God's protection; and faith in recompense

makes labours easy; and the hatefulness of begging is the price paid for conferring; and ungrudgingness in a gift is the cream of intention; and sincerity in affection makes nought of failings; and the dwelling upon men's vices is the worst of faults; and the seeking after safety is the leading-cord of prudence; and the clinging to self-restraint keeps from desire; and evil of disposition is the dishonour of mortals; and the weariness of souls is the bane of love; and the witchcraft of speech is a net to hearts; and the eloquence of the tongue is the grace of narrative; and truthfulness of advice demands friendship; and the bond of affection leads of needs to courtesy; and the habit of cheerfulness is an earnest of nobility; and the index of happiness is the gathering of thanks; and a gain of praise is the treasure of the generous; and the nature of the liberal is the doing of goodness; and the perfecting of kindness is a good deed of man.

THE EIGHTEENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF SINJÂR."

In this Assembly Abû Zayd is represented as gaining a splendid present by the narrative of an alleged misfortune. We are left in doubt whether his story be true or only one of his usual artifices to obtain the bounty of his friends. In a journey from Damascus to Bagdad, the caravan, in which are Ḥârith and Abû Zayd, hálts at Sinjâr, a city of the Diyâr Rabî'ah, which lies on the northern route between Syria and Irak. There a merchant was giving a wedding feast, to which, according to the hospitable custom of the East, all classes were invited. After the more substantial viands have been consumed, a glass vase of sweetmeats is produced, at the sight of which Abû Zayd starts up and quits the circle of guests. On being asked the reason of this conduct he declares that he is bound by an oath not

to remain in the vicinity of anything that is transparent and *betrays* what is inside it. The company unwillingly send away the sweetmeats, and Abû Zayd then tells his story, which is that, being possessed of a beautiful and accomplished slave girl, he had revealed the secret to a false friend, who had betrayed it to the Governor. This officer being desirous to obtain such a paragon as a present to his Prince, had taken the girl from him by force; on which Abû Zayd had vowed that he would never remain in company with any thing that could not keep a secret: and as glass has this defect he must decline to sit opposite to a glass vase. The host respects this somewhat fanciful scruple, and in the end orders sweetmeats to be brought in silver vases, and presents Abû Zayd, not only with the contents of the vessels, but the vessels themselves. Though the conceit on which this composition is founded is puerile enough, the Assembly is one of the most poetical in Ḥarîri's work, and a choice specimen of his rich and elaborate diction. Whatever merits it may possess are, however, diminished by the circumstance that it is a close imitation, and in parts almost a literal copy, of one by Al Hamadâni.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was once on the return journey from Damascus, on my way to the City of Peace,—With travellers of the Benû Nomayr, a company of wealth and worth.—And with us was Abû Zayd, of Serûj, he that is an enchainment to the hasty, and a beguiling to the bereaved, the wonder of the time, the pointed at with the finger for his eloquence.—Now our halting at Sinjâr fell on a time when one of the merchants there was making a marriage feast:—And he bade to his banquet the whole commonalty, both of settled land and of desert; so that his bidding extended to the caravan, and he comprised in it both the important and those of no account.—Now when we had responded to his bidder, and arrived at his hall, he set before us viands of one hand and two, whatever is sweet in the mouth or fair to the eye.—And after this he brought forth a vase, which was as though it had been congealed

of air, or condensed of sunbeam motes, or moulded of the light of the open plain, or peeled from the white pearl: —And it had been furnished with assortments of comfits, and affused with a pervading perfume, and there had been poured into it a draught from Tesnîm, and it disclosed a fair aspect, and the fragrance of a gentle breeze.—Now when our appetites were kindled at its presence, and our palates were eager for the trial of it; and it was imminent that the squadrons should be sent forth against its train, and that we should cry at the spoiling of it, Revenge!—Lo Abû Zayd sprang up like a madman, and sundered from it as far as the lizard is sundered from the fish.—Then we sought of him that he should return, and not be as was Ḳodâr among Thamûd.—But he said, "By Him who raises the dead from their sepulchres, I will not return except the vase be taken away.—So we found no escape from humouring him, and acquitting him of his vow.—And we bade carry it away, and our minds were carried after it and our tears flowed concerning it.—And when he had returned to his seat, and was free from guilt, we asked him wherefore he rose, and for what reason he bade take away the vase.—He said, "Because that glass is a betrayer; and for years I have had an oath that the same place should not hold me and one who betrays."—We said to him, "What is the cause of thy strict oath and thy binding vow?"—He said: I had a neighbour whose tongue cajoled, while his heart was a scorpion; whose speech was a honeycomb to refresh, while his hidden thought was a concentred venom:—And through his living near me I was led to converse with him, and by his false smiling I was deluded into consorting with

him:—And the fairness of his seeming infatuated me to companying with him, and the guile of his character drew me on to intimacy with him.—And I associated with him in the thought that he would be to me as a most close neighbour; but it was made manifest that he was a swooping eagle:—And I was familiar with him in the belief that he was a familiar friend, but he showed that he was a treacherous serpent.—And I ate my salt with him, and knew not that at the testing he would be of those whose loss is rejoiced at:—And I drank my wine with him, and understood not that on trial he would be of those whose departure is a delight.

Now in my house was a maiden to whom no rival could be found in perfection.—If she unveiled, the two lights of heaven were shamed, and each heart was burned with the fires of love.—If she smiled, she made the beads of silver to be despised, and pearls would be sold for what is worthless.—If she gazed, she roused love-fancies; she realized the witchcraft of Babylon.—If she spoke, she enchained the heart of the wise, and called down the wild goats from the crags.—If she read the Koran, she would heal the heart-sick, she would give life to one buried alive; so that thou wouldest think her gifted with the pipes of David.—If she sang, Ma'bad would become as a slave to her, and to Isaac it would be said, "Away! begone!"—If she piped, Zonâm would appear an impostor beside her; although he was a leader in his generation, one confident in his charming.—If she danced, she dislodged the turbans from men's heads; she would make thee forget the dance of the bubbles in the cups.—And possessed of her I despised the red camels; and with the enjoyment of her I

adorned the neck of my prosperity.—And I veiled her face from the sun and moon; I excluded the mention of her from the paths of my night-talk;—Yet withal was I fearful lest a breeze by night might bear her fragrance, or a Ṣaṭîḥ divine of her, or the flashing lightning betray her.—And it came to pass, through the decay of my minished fortune, and the malignness of my unlucky star, that the heat of wine caused me to describe her to my blabbing neighbour.—Then understanding returned after the arrow had been shot, and I felt trouble and vexation, knowing that the thing was lost which was committed to such a sieve.—But yet I stipulated with him to keep close what I had uttered, and to guard my secret even though I should anger him.—And he declared that he treasured secrets as the miser treasures the denar; and that he would not rend veils of confidence even were he exposed to be cast into fire.

But not more than a day or two had passed when it occurred to the ruler of that town, and its Governor having authority,—That he would repair to the court of his Prince to make a new display of his horsemen, and pray a rain from the cloud of his bounty;—And he wished for a present to take with him, such as should accord with the Prince's desire; that he might offer it in the course of his interview.—Whereon he began to be liberal in rewards to his scouts, and to heighten the inducements to whoso should possess him of his wish.—Then stooped that treacherous neighbour his flight to the largess, and, putting on the breast-plate of infamy, rebelled against the blame of the blamer.—And he came to the Governor, stretching his ears, and published what I had told him as a secret.—And I had no alarm till his de-

pendants rushed in to me and his servants swarmed upon me, urging me to prefer him with my peerless pearl, on the condition that I should dictate to him her price. —Then sorrow overwhelmed me as the sea overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host.—And I ceased not to defend her, but defence availed not; and to intercede with him, but intercession profited not.—And as often as he saw in me an increase of evasion and the desire of escape, he shouted, he burned with rage, he gnashed upon me with his teeth.—But yet my soul consented not to part from its full moon, nor that I should tear the heart from my breast.—But when threatening turned to assault, and invective to beating, the fear of death led me to barter the black of my eye for the yellow of coin; but the informer gained nought but guilt and ignominy.—And since then I have had a vow to God Most High that I would never again keep in presence of a betrayer.—Now glass is distinguished by this base quality; nay, its name has been made a proverb for treachery;—So that the tenour of my oath extends to it, and that is the reason that my hand stretches not forth to it.

Now, since I have explained, blame me not that ye have been hindered in the vintage of the cates;

For my excuse in what I have done is plain; and I will repair the rent I have made by my resources, old or new;

So that the pleasantry that I will supply you with shall be more delicious than sweetmeats in the judgment of all the intelligent.

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Then we accepted his excusing, and kissed his cheek,—And said to him, "Long since treachery vexed the Best of Mankind, so that there was declared concerning the woman that carried firewood that which was declared."—After this

we asked him of the behaviour of this tell-tale neighbour, this unregardful intimate:—After he had feathered against him the arrow of delation, and cut the cord of observance,—He said, He took to submission and humiliation, and to interceding with me by people of degree. —But I had straitly charged myself that my familiarity should not seek a return to him until my yesterday should return to me.—And he gained nothing from me but refusal and persistence in aversion; yet was he not disheartened by repulse, nor shamed from his impudence of face; but persevered in overtures and was urgent in requests;—And nought freed me from his annoying and made hopeless to him the gaining of his desire, save some verses in which breathed the vengeful breast and the wounded spirit.—And these proved a driving forth to his devil, an imprisoning of him in his dwelling.—And on their publication he made an irrevocable divorce with joy, and cried, Alas! Perdition!—And despaired of the resurrection of my buried friendship as the infidels despair of the tenants of the tombs.—Then we conjured him to recite them, and give us to smell their fragrance. —He said, "Be it so: man is made up of impatience." —So he recited, and no bashfulness hindered him, no timidity restrained him:

There was a compañion to whom I gave the pure milk of my love's truth when I fancied him true and a friend;

But to whom I showed the estrangement of him that hates when I found him to be foul as the matter of a sore or as tepid water.

I fancied him, before he was tried, a familiar and dutiful; but he has shown himself a churl, one to be censured:

I chose him as one to converse with me, but my heart is now wounded by his wronging;

I thought him to be a helper and compassionate, but I have discovered him to be an accursed one, a devil to be driven away with stones;

I looked upon him as one devoted to me, but my testing of him has disclosed him as a fiend perverse and vile;

And I judged that he would blow a gentle breeze, but he would blow nought but a simoom.

From his serpent-bite which baffled the enchanter I lay wounded; but he had no hurt from me.

On the morning of our separation his condition was erect, but my body was sick;

He was not pleasant and abundant to me; nay, by his evil-doing he was terrible to me, and an adversary.

I said, when I had made trial of him, "Would that he existed not, that he had not been a companion to me."

By his betrayal he made hateful the morning to my heart, since the morning is found to be a betrayer;

And he has brought me to the love of the night, since the black of darkness is a watcher that conceals;

And enough of guilt and blame has the informer in his work, even though he speak the truth.

Said Al Hârith: Now when the master of the house heard his verse and his cadence, and admired his encomium and his satire,—He set him on the couch of his respect, and gave him the first place on his cushion of honour;—Then he bade bring ten dishes of silver, on which were sweetmeats of candy and honey,—And said to him, "The people of the Fire are not as the people of the Garden; nor is it lawful that the innocent should be made as the suspected.—Now these vessels take rank among the sinless in the keeping of secrets; so show them not aversion, nor count Hûd with 'Âd."—Then he bade his servant carry them to his lodging that he might do with them as he would.—And Abû Zayd turned to us and said, "Recite the Chapter of Victory, and be gladsome at the healing of your wound;—For now God hath repaired your bereavement and permitted your meal, and gathered you together to sweetmeats; and it may be that ye mislike a thing, and yet it is your

good."—And when he was thinking of departure he inclined to beg the dishes as a present,—And said to the entertainer, "Truly it is among the marks of good breeding that he who gives aught should give the vessel that holds it."—Said the host, "Both of them and the boy; so speak no more, but rise in peace."—And he leaped up to the reply, and thanked the host as the meadow thanks the rain-cloud.—Then did Abû Zayd lead us to his tent and give us to dispose of his sweet-meats, and began to pass round the dishes, and to divide their contents among the company;—And he said: I know not whether I should complain of that betrayer or thank him; whether I should forget his act or remember it.—For though he was aggressive in his wrong and tinseled his treacherous tale, yet from his cloud did this plenteous rain pour down, and from his sword did this spoil come in to me.—And now it is moving in my mind that I should return to my cubs, and be content with what has come thus easily, and not weary myself nor my camels.—So I will take leave of you as one that is regardful, and commend you to the Best of Guardians.—Then he mounted his beast to return on his track, to bend his course to his people.—And when his strong camel coursed along and his sociableness quitted us, he left us as an assembly whose president is gone, or a night whose moon has set.

THE NINETEENTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF NAṢÎBÎN."

In this composition Ḥarîri displays his knowledge of the Ṭofayli jargon. Among the fancies of his age it was the custom to give to

various kinds of food names compounded with ابو and أم, such as are attached to a great number of animals and inanimate objects. As the Arabs of the desert called a bird ابو براقش, and a she-hyæna أم عامر; and as the milky way was called أمّ السماء, so the Euphuists of the polished cities of Irak called a dish of rice by one *kinyeh*, or bye-name, and a dish of meat by another. To know these seems to have been considered a mark of good breeding; and the learned author did not think them unworthy of a place in his work, as one of the characteristics of the Arabic language. In the same spirit he introduces into the 30th Assembly a number of the cant terms used by the beggars of the time, or as they were called "the people of Sâsân." The story of the Assembly is of the usual simplicity. Abû Zayd is pursuing his ordinary course of life at Naṣîbîn, in the Diyâr Rabî'ah, when he is taken with a serious illness. His friends, hearing of it, hasten to his house in alarm, but are informed that he is better and will receive them. They find him prostrate, but as talkative as ever; and after he has entertained them with his conversation for some time he tells his son, in the enigmatical language of Ṭofayl, to bring a repast for them. They partake of it, and leave him rejoicing in his recovery, and grateful for his hospitality.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: Irak was barren in a certain year through the failure of the stars that bring the rain-cloud;—And the travellers told of the tract of Naṣîbîn, and the comfort of its wealthy people. —Then I mounted a camel of Mahrah, and fixed a lance of Samhar,—And journeyed, land sending me on to land, and hill drawing me up from dale, until I reached it, worn man on worn beast.—Now when I had halted in its fertile dwelling-place, and won a portion in its pasture, I purposed that I would lay down my neck in it, and take its people for my neighbours,—Until the dried year should revive, and the spring-rain visit the land of my family.—Now, by Allah, my eye-ball had not tasted of its sleep, my night had not travailed of its day, ere I found Abû Zayd, the Serûji, roaming the quarters of Naṣîbîn, now stumbling with the crazed,

now winning with the fortunate.—And from his mouth was he scattering pearls, and he milked the milk-flow with both his hands.—Then I found that my campaign had now gathered a booty, and my single lot had become two-fold;—And I ceased not to follow his shadow wherever he sped, and to glean his utterance as often as he spoke,—Until there came on him a sickness whose term was prolonged, whose sharp knives bared his bone; so that it went near to rob him of the robe of life, to give up to Abû Yahya.—Then did I feel through the loss of his presence and the interruption of his teaching, as he feels that is put far from his desire, or the suckling at the weaning.—After this it was rumoured that his pledge was already forfeit, that the talon of death was fixed in him.—And his comrades were disturbed at the rumouring of the rumourers, and they swarmed to his courtyard, hurrying in:

Bewildered, their grief making them to reel, as if they had been sucking the old wine;

They poured forth their tears, and they rent their bosoms, and they beat their cheeks, and they wounded their heads;

And they had been willing that fate had made a peace with him, and had seized their possessions and themselves.

Said the narrator: Now I was of those who joined to his comrades and hastened to his gate.—And when we had arrived at his court-yard and assayed to scent the news of him, his boy came forth to us, his lips parted with a smile.—And we inquired concerning the Shaykh as regarded his complaints, and the truth of the strength of his disorders.—He said, "He was lately in the grasp of the sickness and the wearing of the fever; until the lingering disease wasted him, and the killing disease exhausted him.—But afterward God was gracious in

strengthening his last gasp, and he recovered from his trance.—So return on your paths and put off your disquietude;—For he is now one to go out and in, and to pledge you in wine."—Then we made much of his glad news, and urged that we might see him; and he entered announcing us, then came out permitting us:—And we found Abû Zayd a prostrate, but his tongue going freely.—Then we took seat about his bed, gazing on his lineaments.—And he turned his eye round the assemblage; then said, Look on this, the offspring of the moment:

God has saved me, thanks be to Him, from a sickness that went near to blot me out;

And has granted me recovery; though it must needs be that death will one day waste me.

Death forgets me not; yet he gives me a delay before the end of my feeding.

If it be decreed, then will no friend avail, nay, not even the guarded domain of Kolayb, to guard me from him.

Nor care I if his day be near, or if death be put off for a season.

For what boast is there in life, in which I behold afflictions, nay, they wear me out?

Said Al Ḥârith: Then we saluted him with wishes for the lengthening of his term and the withdrawal of his fear;—And invited each other to rise through fear of annoying him.—But he said, "Nay, but stay with me during the light of to-day that by your pleasantry ye may heal my sadness;—For your conversation is the food of my soul, the magnet of my friendliness."—Then we aimed at contenting him and guarded from disobeying him; and turned to discourse, gathering its cream, throwing away its froth;—Until the time of the day-sleep came on and the tongues were weary with talking.—And it was a day hot with a fervent heat, ripening the orchard.—So he said, "Surely drowsiness is now bending

down your necks and seeking your eye-corners; and he is a strenuous adversary, a suitor not to be repulsed. —So make alliance with him by a day-sleep, and pattern in this by the Traditions handed down."—Said the narrator: Then we followed what he said, and we slept and he slept; and God smote upon the ears, and poured out slumber on the eyelids,—Until we passed from the domain of Being, and by sleep were hindered from prayer.—And we waked not until the heat was now abated and the day was old.—Whereupon we washed hand and foot for the two mute prayers, and performed what loosed us of our debt.—Then we stirred for departure to the place of our camel-saddles.—But Abû Zayd turned to his cub, who was after his likeness and make, and said: I fancy that the Father of Indwelling has now lighted a coal in their stomachs;—So call for the Father of Assembling, for he is glad news for every hungry one:—And follow with the Father of Pleasantness, him who is patient at every wrong;—Then reinforce by the Father of Lovingness, the loved of every one that is wise; him that is turned about between burning and torment;—And on! with the Father of Acuteness, for excellent is he as a companion;—And ho! with the Father of Help, for there is no attendant like him;—And if thou bring on the Father of Comeliness, how comely will he make his comeliness;—And haste with the Mother of Hospitality, her who may remind thee of Chosroes;—And forget not the Mother of Strengthening, for how many are those who tell of her; —And call to the Mother of Joyfulness; then assault her, it is no crime;—And end with the Father of Dignity, the consoler of every sorrowful one;—And if

thou join with him the Father of Loftiness thou will blot out thy name from among the niggardly.—And beware of summoning the Two Rumourers before the rising of the camels of departure.—And when the company have ceased from their hand-washing, and have handled the Father of Softness,—Then carry round to them the Father of Generosity, for he is the sign of the generous.

Said Al Ḥârith: Then his son understood the delicacies of his hinting by the subtlety of his discernment.—And he went round among us with viands and perfume, until the sun gave notice of the setting.—Now when we had resolved on departure, we said to him, "Seest thou not this marvellous day, how its morn showed gloomy, but its even is brilliant?"—And he prostrated himself long in prayer; then raised his head and said:

Despair not in calamities of a gladdening that shall wipe away thy sorrows;
For how many a simoom blows, then turns to a gentle breeze and is changed!
How many a hateful cloud arises, then passes away and pours not forth!
And the smoke of the wood, fear is conceived of it, yet no blaze appears from it;
And oft sorrow rises, and straightway sets again.
So be patient when fear assails, for time is the father of wonders;
And hope from the peace of God blessings not to be reckoned.

Said Al Ḥârith: Then we noted down his excellent verses and kept giving thanks to God Most High: and we took leave of him, glad at his recovery, overwhelmed by his bounty.

THE TWENTIETH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF MAYYÂFÂRIḲÎN."

In this Assembly Abû Zayd laments the decay of his strength, and his advancing age, under the semblance of a mighty and valiant hero, to provide a shroud for whom he asks the bounty of the company.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was making towards Mayyâfâriḳîn with a company of the well suited, men who disputed not in familiar talk, who knew not the taste of dissembled hatred.—And with them I was as one who quits not his abode, who travels not from his friend and neighbour;—And when we had brought to their knees the camels of journeying, and had passed from our saddles to our nests, we commanded each other to bear in mind companionship, and we forbade separation in a strange land.—And we took a chamber that we might frequent it at the two ends of day and present each other with the choice of the news.—Now while we were there on a certain day, and had strung ourselves on the thread of union,—Lo! there stood by us one with a bold tongue and a loud voice;—And he greeted with the greeting of a wizard who blows on knots; of one who hunts all, from the lion to the sheep. —Then he said:

Habeo, amici, miram narrationem, à quâ exemplum sibi sumat auditor peritus et intelligens.

Vidi in flore ætatis meæ juvenem fortissimum, cui gladii erat acies penetrantis:

In certamen irruit perinde ac si certus esset aliqud audendi, et non pertimuit.

His præliis usque eo angustias dilatavit ut id quod obstructum fuerat pateret.

Ubi provocavit adversarios nunquam rediit à pugnæ contentione sine spiculo sanguine imbuto :

Nec unquam instituit arcem oppugnare arduam, occlusam, formidabilem, timendam,

Quin clamatum sit, cùm id instituisset : Victoria à cœlo et præsidium appropinquat.

Præterea, quot noctes egit vestibus adolescentiæ tectus nitidis ;

Molles puellæ et dabant ei et receperunt ab eo oscula ; et ille ubique gratus fuit et jucundus.

Sed tempus non desiit fortitudinem illius et vires eripere ;

Donec anni ita eum afflixerint ut ab illo conjunctissimi amici decederent.

Debilis fuit magus, nec morbum ejus sanare potuit, et tumultuatus fuit medicus :

Ita ut discesserit à candidis puellis, et discesserint ab eo, postea quam et ab eis responsum accepisset, eisque respondisset.

Evasitque incurvus formâ, nam quicunque vivit miseriis senectutis est obnoxius.

Ecce illum hodiè veste funebri involutum ! Et quis mortui peregrini curat reliquias.[1]

Then he broke openly into wailing, and wept with the weeping of the lover over his beloved.—And when his tear was stanched and his passion cooled, he said, O ye, who are as a pasture to the forage-scouts, an example to the generous ; by Allah, I have not spoken with falsehood, I have not told you save from beholding.—Now if there were a thong to my staff, or a thin shower to my cloud, I would myself have done that to which I call you ; I would not stand as one who directs to it.—But how can there be flying without a wing, or is it a crime on one that he is poor ?

Said the narrator : Then began the company to consult of what they should advise, and to whisper of what they should do ;—And he suspected that they were in purpose to dismiss him with refusal, or to importune him

[1] The above translation is that of Sir William Jones, with some slight alterations.

for proof.—And it escaped him to say, O mirages of the plain, white shingle of the hollow! What is this taking of thought which shame revolts at?—It is as though ye were tasked with a heavy labour, not with a rag; or had been asked the gift of a province, not of a mantle; or had been urged to the clothing of the Ka'beh, not to the shrouding of a corpse.—Fie on him whose rock is not moist, whose gravel oozes not!

Now when the company had perceived his glibness and the saltness of his savour, each one made him whole by a gift, and bore with his light rain through fear of his flood.—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now this beggar was standing behind me, hidden by my back from my eye.—But when the company had contented him by their out-pouring, and it was incumbent on me to take example by them, I drew the ring from my little finger and turned to him my gaze,—And lo! he was our Shaykh, the Serûji, without deception, without dispute.—Then I was sure it was a lying tale he had lied, and a net that he had laid.—But not the less did I fold his cloth over its rent and keep his splayness of tooth from inspection,—And threw him the ring, and said, "Use it for the cost of the mourning assembly."—He said, "Well done! how burns thy flame! how noble is thy deed!"—Then he went off, running straight forward and trotting his trot as of old.—But I longed for a knowledge of his dead man, and to examine his pretence to pious duty;—So I struck my leg and kindled the ardour of my running, until I reached him a bow-shot off, and beheld him clearly in an empty place.—Then I caught him by the joining of his sleeves and stopped him from the career of his

race-course,—And said to him, "By Allah, thou hast no refuge from me, and no escape, until thou show me thy shrouded corpse.—Whereupon he pointed to himself; and I said, "God fight against thee; how playful art thou in craft, how wily after the grist!"—Then I returned to my companions as returns the scout who lies not to his people, who embellishes not his speech.—And I told them what I had seen; I disguised not, nor did I dissemble.—And they burst into laughter at the matter, and cursed that dead man.

THE TWENTY-FIRST ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF RAYY."

Al Ḥârith, being at Rayy, in Persia, finds the people flocking to hear a preacher of great eloquence and sanctity, and following them to the place of assembling, listens to a discourse from an aged man in ecclesiastical costume. When the sermon is over, a suppliant, who cannot prevail on the Governor to listen to his complaint against an official who had wronged him, calls upon the preacher to aid him by his admonitions, on which the preacher at once indites another discourse in reproof of the Governor. The latter is moved to repentance, hastens to do justice, rewards the preacher, and solicits acquaintance with him. The preacher, who is no other than Abû Zayd, goes off rejoicing in the success of his day's work, having previously given Ḥârith some moral counsel.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: Ever since I perfected my forethought and knew right from wrong, I gave care to incline to admonishings and eschew angering words,—That I might be adorned with graces of disposition, and be free from what brands with shamelessness;—And I ceased not to keep myself to this discipline, and to allay by it the coals of wrath,

until habituation in it became nature, and application to it a desire willingly obeyed.—Now when I descended at Rayy (and I had now loosed the loops of error, and knew good from evil), I saw there one morning crowd on the track of crowd;—And they were spreading with the spread of locusts, and running with the running of steeds,—And describing one to another a preacher to whom they were tending, and they set Ibn Sam'ûn below him.—Then it hindered me not from hearkening to the preachings, and making trial of the preacher, that I must endure the clamorous and bear the pushing;—So I followed as follow the obedient, and slipped into the thread of the throng,—Until we came to a meeting-place, which had united the ruler and the ruled, and gathered the eminent and the obscure;—And in the midst of its halo, and among its full moons, was an old man, bowed and with a breast-hunch, and he wore the cap and the cloak;—And he was breaking forth into a sermon to heal breasts and to soften rocks; and I heard him say, and men's minds were charmed by it:

Son of man, how thou cleavest to that which deceives thee, and clingest to that which harms thee!—How thou art given to that which seduces thee; how thou art gladdened at him who flatters thee!—Thou art troubled about that which wearies thee, but art careless of that which concerns thee.—Thou drawest wide the bow of thy transgression; thou robest thyself with covetousness which will destroy thee!—Thou art not content with what is enough; thou abstainest not from the forbidden!—Thou hearkenest not to admonishings; thou art not deterred by threatening!—It is thy habit

to veer with desires; thou stumblest with the stumbling of the purblind beast!—It is thy care to labour in making gain, and to gather an inheritance for thine heirs! —It pleases thee to increase what belongs to thee, but thou rememberest not what is before thee!—Thou art ever intent on thy two caves; thou carest not whether the account shall be in thy favour or against thee!— Dost thou think that thou shalt be left at large, or that thou shalt not be reckoned with to-morrow?—Or dost thou count that Death will take bribes; that he will distinguish between the lion and the fawn?—No, by Allah, nor wealth nor children shall ward off death; and nought profits the people of the tombs save the accepted work.—Then blessing to him who hears and retains and makes good what he claims; and withholds his soul from desire, and knows that he who turns from evil is a gainer;—And that man shall have nought save his own work; and that this work surely it shall be shown.—Then he recited as one who is fearful, but with a high-pitched voice:

By thy life! mansions and wealth will not avail when the rich man dwells in the ground and abides in it;

So be liberal with thy wealth in things pleasing to God, content with what thou gainest of His hire and reward;

And anticipate by it the change of Time, for he seizes with his crooked talon and his tooth;

And trust not treacherous fortune and its deceit, for how many a lowly one has it marred, how many a noble!

But resist the desire of the soul, which no erring one ever obeyed but he fell from his high places.

And keep to the fear of God, and the dread of Him, that thou mayest escape from his punishment which is to be feared.

Neglect not to call to mind thy sin, but weep for it with tears that shall be like the rain-flood at its pouring;

And figure to thy mind Death and his stroke, and the terror of his meeting, and the taste of his wormwood cup!

For the end of the dwelling of the living is a pit, to which he shall descend, brought down from his towers.

Then well-done! the servant whom the evil of his deed grieves, and who shows amendment before the shutting of his gate.

Said Al Ḥârith: Then the assembly remained amid tears that they shed, and repentance that they showed; until the sun declined, and the day's duties pressed upon us.—Now when the voices were low, and silence had gathered, and the tears and the preachings had gone to rest,—One crying for help cried to the Prince who was present, and began to wail to him of his tyrannous agent.—But the Prince leaned to the adversary, and was careless of discovering his wrong.—And when the suppliant despaired of redress from him, he called up the preacher to admonish him;—Who rose as rises the prompt, and recited, referring to the Prince:

Wonderful! a man hoping to attain to rule; and then when he attains to his desire he wrongs;

He weaves warp and woof in tyrannies; now lapping at their well, now bidding others to lap.

Nor cares he, when he is following his desires in them, whether he maintains his religion or destroys it:

Oh woe to him! if he knew well that there is no state but changes, surely he would not transgress;

Or if he saw clearly what is the repentance of him who inclines his hearing to the lie of informers, he would not incline it.

But obey thou him in whose hand is the leading-cord; cast down thine eye if he neglect observance or speak vainly:

And graze on bitter pasture when he calls thee to the grazing on it, and water at the salt well when he forbids thee the sweet.

And bear his injury even though its touch afflicts thee, and pours out the flow of thy tears, nay exhausts it;

For fortune shall give thee the laugh of him when it departs from him, and kindles for the ambush against him the fire of war.

And it shall bring down on him exultation, when he appears vacant of his office, emptied of it;

And thou shalt be pitiful to him when his cheek lies soiled on the dust of shame.

This is his fate: and then surely he shall one day stand in the place where even the master of eloquence shall be found a lisper:

And he shall be gathered to judgment viler than the toad-stool of the plain; he shall be reckoned with for his shortcoming and excess:

And he shall be chastised for that which he has committed, and for him whom he has chosen; he shall be demanded of for what he sipped and what he supped.

And he shall be reckoned exactly with concerning small things, as he was wont to do with mankind, but more thoroughly.

So that he shall bite his hand at his governing, and wish that he had not sought from it what he sought.

Then he said: O thou who art belted with authority, and trained to rule!—Put away wantonness at thy dominion, and vain trusting in thy might:—For dominion is a breeze that changes and power is a lightning that deceives.—And truly the happiest of rulers is he whose people are happy in him, and the most wretched in both worlds is he whose ruling is ill.—Then be thou not as one who neglects the life to come and disregards it, who loves the fleeting life and seeks it, who wrongs the people and afflicts them, and who, when he bears rule, walks in the earth to do violence in it.—For, by Allah, the Judge shall not be unregarding; thou shalt not be left at large, O man: but the balance shall be set for thee, and as thou rewardest thou shalt be rewarded.—Said Al Ḥârith: Then the Governor was sullen at what he heard, and his colour changed and changed:—And he began to groan concerning his rule, and to follow sigh with sigh.—Then he attended to the complainer, and rid him of his complaint, and to him that was complained of, and rebuked him.—And he was courteous to the preacher, and gave him gifts, and urged him to visit him.—And the wronged man departed victorious, and the wronger checked.—Then the preacher went forth swag-

gering among his comrades, glorying in the success of his bargain.—But I followed him up, and stepped crouching, and showed him a sharp glance.—And when he discerned what I hid from him, and was aware of the turning of my face to him, he said, "The better of two guides is he who leads aright."—Then he came near me, and recited:

I am he whom thou knowest, Hârith,
The talker with kings, the wit, the intimate.
I charm as charm not the triple-twisted strings,
At times a brother of earnest, at times a jester.
Events have not changed me since I met thee,
Nor has vexing calamity peeled my branch;
Nor has any splitting edge cloven my tooth;
But my claw is fixed in every prey:
On each herd that roams my wolf is ravaging;
So that it is as though I were the heir of all mankind,
Their Shem, their Ham, and their Japhet.

Said Al Hârith, son of Hammâm: Then I said, "By Allah, now thou art surely Abû Zayd; yet thou hast been godly beyond 'Amr Ibn 'Obayd."—Then he was cheerful with the cheerfulness of the hospitable when he is visited, and said: Listen, my brother:

Keep to truth, although it scorch thee with the fire of threatening:
And seek to please God; for the most foolish of mankind is he who angers the master and pleases the slave.

Then he took leave of his fellows and departed, trailing his sleeves.—And we searched for him afterwards in Rayy, and sought to get news of him by the rolls of folding.—But there was none of us who knew of his abode, or could learn what locust had gone off with him.

THE TWENTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF THE EUPHRATES."

Al Ḥârith, accompanied by some official writers, is in a boat on the Euphrates; the party being engaged in an inspection of the land for the purpose of fixing the taxation. They meet with a person in shabby garb, whom they treat with much lack of courtesy; until the conversation falling on the comparative merits of secretaries and accountants, the stranger, who is Abû Zayd, shows his eloquence by a rhetorical address on the subject. They then seek to conciliate him; but he quits them in anger, after reciting some verses on the folly and injustice of judging by appearances. This difficult Assembly exhibits a species of composition much in favour among the Arabs, in which the poet or orator first praises and then blames, or first exalts the one of two rivals and then the other. Compare the Third Assembly, in which a gold denar is thus treated; and the addresses of Sheddâd and Sahil ibn Hârûn, on gold and glass, Ar. Prov. II. p. 780. The speech of Abû Zayd on the two orders of scribes is, throughout, an elaborate display of paronomasia.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I betook myself, during a time of quiet, to the water-lands of the Euphrates;—And there I met with scribes, more excellent than the sons of Al Furât, more pleasant in manners than the sweet waters.—And I joined myself to them for their culture, not for their gold, and I companied with them for their scholarship, not for their banquets.—And among them I sat with equals of Al Ḳa'ḳâ', son of Showr, and with them I attained to plenty after want.—Until they made me sharer in food and dwelling, and set me above themselves, as the finger-top is above the finger:—And they took me as the son of their intimacy in time of office and of leisure, and the treasurer of their secret in earnest and jest.—Now it happened on a certain time that they were called to visit in their

order the corn lands of the villages:—Then they chose of the lofty-sailed boats one black, of unmixed hue:—Thou wouldst think it immovable, yet it fleeted as fleet the clouds and glided on the deep as a serpent.—Then they called me to consenting, and invited me to companying.—And when we had mounted our sable beast, and set ourselves in our cushion-saddle that moved on the water,—We found there an old man, on whom was a thread-bare coat and a worn turban.—Then the company loathed his presence, and found fault with whoever had brought him; and would have purposed to put him forth of the ship, but that their calmness returned to them.—And when he spied that we deemed his shadow to be heavy, and his shower cold, he assayed to converse, but was silenced, and he praised God after sneezing, but no one blessed him.—Then was he speechless, looking at the pass he had reached, and waiting for the help which comes to the wronged.—And we, we roamed through the bye-paths of the serious and the gay;—Until there occurred a mention of the two kinds of official writing, and their excellence, and a distinguishing of the more excellent.—And one said that the scribes of Composition were the noblest of scribes, while another leaned to the preferring of Accountants:—And the arguing grew sharp, and the dispute grew long.—Until, when there remained no longer an arena for the contention, or a field for the debate,—Said the old man: My friends, ye have made much clamour, and adduced the true and the mistaken.—But the clear decision rests with me, so be content with my coin, and consult no one after me.—Know that the art of Composition is the more lofty, though the art of Account may be the more useful.

—The pen of correspondence is a choice orator, but the pen of account-keeping picks up phrases carelessly:—And the fablings of eloquence are copied to be studied, but the ledgers of accounts are soon blotted out and razed.—And the Composer is the Johayneh for information, and the post-bag of secrets, and the confidant of the mighty, and great among guests.—And his pen is the tongue of sovereignty, and the knight of the skirmish; a Lokmân of wisdom, and the interpreter of purpose: it carries glad news, and it warns, it is the intercessor and the envoy.—By it fortresses are won, and foes are vanquished, and the rebel is made obedient, and the distant is brought near;—And its master is free from suits, secure from the malice of accusers, praised in the assemblies, not exposed to the drawing up of registers.

Now when, in his judgment, he had arrived at this point, he saw from the glances of the company that he had sowed love and hatred, that he had pleased a part and angered a part.—So he followed up his discourse by saying: Not but that the art of Account is based on verification, and the art of Composing is founded on fabrication.—For the pen of the Accountant holds firm, but the pen of the Composer stumbles:—And between taking tribute by the impost on transactions and the reading of the leaves of volumes, is a difference to which comparison cannot apply, into which doubt cannot enter:—For tribute fills purses, but reading empties the head; and the tax of the memorandum-book enriches the overseer, but the interpretation of rolls wearies the eye.—And then also the Accountants are the guardians of wealth, the bearers of burdens, the truthful relators, the

trustworthy envoys, the guides in doing justice and obtaining it, the sufficing witnesses in breach of contract. —And of their number is the Minister of Finance, who is the Hand of the Prince, the Pivot of the Council, the Balance of business, the overseer of the agents.—To him is the reference in peace and war; on him is the management in revenue and expenditure; by him hang evil and advantage; in his hand is the rein of giving and denying.—And were it not for the pen of Accountants the fruit of earning would perish, and fraud would endure to the Day of Judgment; the order of transactions would be loosened; the wound of wrongs would be unavenged; the neck of just-dealing would be fettered; the sword of wrong-dealing would be drawn.—Moreover, the pen of composition fables, but the pen of accounting interprets; the Accountant is a close scrutinizer; the Composer is an Abû Barâḳish; —Yet each, when he rises high, has his venom until he be met and charmed; and in what each produces there is vexing until he be visited and bribed; save those that believe and work righteousness—and how few are they!

Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm: Now when he had thus supplied our hearings with what was pure and good, we asked him of his lineage; but he was suspicious, and shrank from telling it; and if he had found a place of escaping he would have escaped.—Then from his secrecy was I in sorrow; but after a time I recollected him,—And I said, "Now by Him who controls the rolling heaven and the voyaging ships, surely I catch the breeze of Abû 'Zayd, though once I knew him lord of comeliness and vigour."—And he

smiled, laughing at my speech, and said, "I am he, though with a change in state and strength."—Whereupon I said to my companions, "This is he, after whose fashioning none can fashion, whose sprite is not to be vied with."—Then they courted his friendship, and offered him wealth; but he declined from intimacy, and leaned not to the gift.—And he said, "Since ye have hurt my honour on account of my worn garment, and cast a shadow on my soul for the threadbareness of my coat,—I will look upon you only with a heated eye; ye shall have from me only a ship's companionship.—Then he recited:

Hear, my brother, commandment from a counsellor who mingles not the purity of his counsel with deceit:

Hasten not with a decisive judgment in the praise of him whom thou hast not tried, nor in the rebuke of him;

But stay thy judgment on him until thou hast had a view of his two characters in his two conditions of content and anger;

And until his deceiving flash be distinguished from his truthful one by those who watch it, and his flood from his light rain;

And then if thou perceive what dishonours him, hide it generously; but if thou see what becomes him, publish it:

And whoso deserves to be exalted, exalt him; and whoso deserves abasement, abase him to the sewer.

Know that the pure gold in the vein of the earth is hidden until it is brought out by the digging:

And the worth of the denar, its secret appears by scratching it, and not from the beauty of the graving.

It is folly that thou shouldst magnify the ignorant by reason of the brightness of his dress or the splendour of his adorning;

Or that thou shouldst make little of the man who is refined in soul on account of the threadbareness of his garb, or the shabbiness of his furniture.

For how many an owner of two torn mantles is reverenced for his worth, and he that is striped in his garments has ill-fame through his baseness.

For when a man approaches not to infamy, then are his rags only the steps to his throne.

It hurts not the sword that its sheath be worn, nor the hawk that its nest be mean.

Then he delayed not to bid the sailors stop, and he ascended from the boat and made off.—But each of us repented in that he had been incautious towards him, and drooped his eyelid over his mote,—And we vowed that we would never slight a man for the raggedness of his garment; that we would not despise the sword while hidden in the sheath.

THE TWENTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF THE PRECINCT."

In this Assembly Abû Zayd is represented as showing his skill in artificial composition. He carries his son before the Governor or criminal judge of Bagdad, and accuses him of theft, in having stolen two-thirds of a copy of verses. The boy had, he said, taken two-thirds of each of several verses, and thus made a poem of his own. The Governor asks how this can be, and bids him repeat both poems, when it appears that Abû Zayd had constructed a poem with a double rhyme, one rhyme at the end of the verse, and one at the end of the fourth foot, so that by striking off the last two feet of each verse a new poem could be formed. The boy, however, declares that he had not taken his father's verses, and that the coincidence was merely fortuitous. The Governor then, to test this, bids them repeat alternate verses on a subject which he should give them; if the boy could extemporize as well as his father, it would be evident that his defence was a just one. This serves to introduce a most elaborate set of verses, full of paronomasia on the subject of a cruel and disdainful beauty. The Governor then bids them be reconciled; and on the old man pleading poverty as a reason for refusing to support his son, the Governor relieves their necessities. He soon discovers that he has been duped, and binds Ḥârith, who, as usual, had witnessed the incident, to profound secrecy.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related:—My wonted home was irksome to me in the prime of my time,

through a dreaded calamity, through a fear that came upon me:—And I poured out the cup of drowsiness, and put to their pace the camels of the night-march.—And I traversed in my journey rough places which no steps had smoothed, to which the Ḳaṭa would not find its way;—Until I came to the domain of the Khalifate, and the sanctuary which guards from fear.—Then I put off the sense of dread and its conception, and robed myself in the raiment of security and its vest;—And limited my care to the culling of delight, and the looking upon pleasure.—Now I went forth one day to the Precinct to exercise my good steed, and to circle my eye among its beauties.—And behold! horsemen who followed each other, and men on foot who swarmed:—And eke an old man long of tongue but short of cloak, who held by the collar a lad fresh in youth but worn of tunic.—So I spurred on the track of the spectators until we arrived at the gate of the Prefecture.—And there was the Master of Protection sitting squarely on his cushion, awing by his deportment.—Then said the old man to him: "God magnify the Governor, and set his foot on high!—Know that I bred this youth from a weanling, and brought him up from an orphan; and then failed not in instructing him.—But when he now was shrewd and strong, he bared and brandished the sword of enmity.—. Though I imagined not that he would be perverse to me, and insolent, since by me was he watered and made fruitful."—Said the lad to him: "On what offence of mine hast thou hit, that thou publishest this foul thing of me?—For, by Allah, I have not covered the face of thy kindness; I have not rent the veil of thy secret; I have not broken the staff of thy estate; I have not

disregarded the rehearsing of thanks to thee."—Then said to him the old man, "Woe to thee, what guilt is fouler than thine, what vice more base than thy vice? —For thou hast claimed my magic and appropriated it; thou hast arrogated my poetry and stolen it.—Now among poets the stealing of poetry is more shameful than the stealing of the white and yellow; and their jealousy over the daughters of their wits is as their jealousy over virgin daughters."

Said the Governor to the old man, "When he stole, did he *flay*, or *transform*, or *copy*?"—Said he, "Now by Him who made poetry the register of the Arabs and the interpreter of scholarship, he did nought less than dock the completeness of its exposition, and make foray on two thirds of its flock." Said the Governor, "Recite the verses altogether, that it may appear what he took from the sum of them."—Then he recited:

O thou who courtest the base world, know that it is a net of destruction, a pool of impurities;

A habitation which, when it makes thee laugh to-day, makes thee weep to-morrow: away with such a habitation!

When its clouds overshadow no thirst is refreshed by them; for they are a dry cloud that deceives.

Its forays cease not, nor is its prisoner ransomed even by the mightiest of stakes.

Towards how many a one made wanton by false confidence in it, until he has shown himself contumacious, one overstepping his power,

Has it turned the back of the shield, and made its blades to lap of his blood, and leaped to the taking of revenge!

So keep guard on thy life, lest it pass away lost in the world, left astray without any protection.

And cut the bonds of thy love for the world and thy seeking of it; so shalt thou find right guidance and comfort of the inner parts.

And when it makes a truce from its stratagem, be thou on thy

watch against the warring of enemies, and the assault of the treacherous:

And know that its calamities come suddenly, even though the goal be far, and the journeys of the fates be tardy.

Then said the Governor: "And now what did this lad?"—Said the old man, "Of his meanness in recompensing he made an attack on my six-feet verses, and cut off two feet, and diminished from their measures two measures, so that the loss in them is a double loss."—Said the Governor, "Shew what he took and whence he cut."—He said, "Let thy hearing feed of me; give thy heart to understand me;—That thou mayest perceive well how he drew the sword upon me; that thou mayest estimate the greatness of his transgression towards me." Then he recited, and his sighs ascended:

O thou who courtest the base world, know that it is a net of destruction;

A habitation which, when it makes thee laugh to-day, makes thee weep to-morrow;

When its clouds overshadow no thirst is refreshed by them.

Its forays cease not, nor is its prisoner ransomed.

Towards how many a one made wanton by false confidence in it, until he has shown himself contumacious,

Has it turned the back of the shield, and made its blades to lap of his blood!

So keep guard on thy life lest it pass away, lost in the world, left astray;

And cut the bonds of thy love for the world, and thy seeking of it, so shalt thou find right guidance.

And when it makes a truce from its stratagem, be thou on thy watch against the warring of enemies:

And know that its calamities come suddenly even though the goal be far.

Then turned the Governor to the boy and said, "Perdition on thee for a rebellious disciple and a thieving pupil!"—But the lad said, "May I remain aloof from scholarship and its sons! may I be joined to whoever

is adverse to it, and breaks down its edifices! if ever his verses came to my knowledge before I connected my own chaplet,—For it is only that our thoughts have chanced to draw at the same source as the hoof oft falls on the hoof-print."

Said Al Ḥârith: Now it was as though the Governor allowed the truth of his assertion and repented of the hastiness of his blaming.—And he kept thinking on what means would disclose to him the truth, and how he might distinguish the genius from the fool;—And he saw no way but to set them to a contest, and to bind them together with the cord of rivalry.—So he said to them, "If ye wish for the exposure of him that lacks, and for the manifesting of the true from the false, do ye now alternate in versifying and contend, wheel in the race of verse-completing and run together:—That through clear proof he who perishes may perish, he who lives may live."—They said to him with one tongue and an agreeing answer, "We are content with thy testing, so give us thy command."—He said, "Of all the kinds of eloquence I am fondest of tejnîs, and I look upon it as the chief of them.—So string now ten verses, weaving them with its colouring, broidering them with its ornament;—And put in them the tale of my condition in respect to a mistress of mine, who is rare of form, dark red of lip, graceful in undulation, but full of pride and fault-finding, given to feign forgetfulness of agreement, and to prolong denial, and to break promise, while I am as her slave."—Then started forth the old man as the winning steed, while the youth followed him like the second in the course.—And they raced together verse by verse in

this order, until the series of verses was perfected and made up:

Old Man. There is a ruddy-lipped one who has compassed my enslaving by the delicacy of her utterance, and left me the companion of sleeplessness through her perfidy.

Youth. She has assayed to slay me by her aversion: truly I am in her bond, since she has gotten my heart altogether.

Old Man. I give faith to her falsehood for fear of her turning from me; I am content to listen to her folly through dread that she should fly me.

Youth. I deem her tormenting to be sweet; and as often as she renews my torment the love of being kindly to her is renewed in me.

Old Man. She is forgetful of duty, and to forget is a fault; she angers my heart—the heart which guards her secret.

Youth. What is most wonderful in her is the glorying of her vanity; yet do I make too much of her for me to speak to her of her pride.

Old Man. From me she has praise sweet of fragrance; but my lot from her is a folding up of love after its out-spreading.

Youth. Oh! if she were just she would not be fault-finding; but she wrongs me; another, and not I, gathers the dew of her mouth.

Old Man. Were it not for her graceful motion I would turn my rein in haste to another, the light of whose full moon I might look upon.

Youth. But notwithstanding the discordance between her and me, I hold the bitter as sweet through my docility to her command.

Now when in alternation they had recited these verses to the Governor, he was amazed at the wit of two so justly balanced,—And said, "I testify before God that ye are the Farḳadân of heaven, and like a pair of fire-staves in their case.—Now surely this youth, he spends of what God has given him; through his own wealth he is independent of another.—So, old man, repent of thy suspicion of him, and turn again to honouring him."—Said the old man, "Far be it that my love should return to him, or my confidence cleave to him;—For I have proved his ingratitude for kind-

ness; I have been tried by him with shameful revolt." —But the lad interrupted him and said, "O friend, know that contention is ill luck, and spite meanness; to hold suspicion as truth is a sin; to vex the innocent is a wrong.—And granted that I have committed an offence and wrought a crime, rememberest thou not what thou didst thyself recite to me in the season of thy familiarity?

Pardon thy brother when he mingles his right aiming with error;
And shrink from rebuking him if he swerve or decline;
Keep to thy kind dealing towards him whether he thank the kindness or slight it:
Be thou obedient when he revolts; be thou lowly when he magnifies himself; draw near to him when he goes from thee:
Keep faith with him even though he fail in what thou and he have stipulated;
And know that if thou seek a perfect man thou desirest beyond bounds.
Who is there who has never done ill? Who is there whose deed is always fair?
Dost thou not see the loved and the hated linked together in one class,
As the thorn comes forth on the branches with the fruit that is gathered.
And the delight of long life, lo! there mingles with it the trouble of hoariness.
If thou examine well the sons of the time thou wilt find the most of them but refuse.

Then began the old man to dart his tongue as darts the serpent, and to gaze with the gazing of the towering hawk.—And he said, "By Him who hath adorned the heaven with its fires, and sent down the water from the clouds, truly my declining from reconciliation is but from fear of ignominy.—For this lad was accustomed that I should victual him, and have regard to his affairs. —And erewhile fortune poured plenteously, and I was not a niggard.—But as for now, the time is frowning,

the contents of life are misery: so that this my garb is a loan, and my house not a mouse approaches it."—Then the heart of the Governor grew tender at their speech, and he was pitiful to them because of the changes of their nights.—And he inclined to distinguish them by his help, and he bade the lookers-on to withdraw.—Said the narrator: Now I had been gazing at the face of the old man, that perchance I might get a knowledge of him when I should spy his features.—But the crowding would not discover him, nor open to me that I might approach him.—But when the rows were broken, and the bystanders sped off, I marked him, and behold he was Abû Zayd, and the lad was his lad, and I knew then his purpose in what he had done.—And I was near swooping down on him, to make myself known to him, but he threw me off with a glance of his eye, and stopped me with a sign of his hand.—So I kept my place, and delayed my departing: and the Governor said, "What is thy wish, and wherefore is thy staying?"—Quickly the old man took him up, and said, "He is my friend, the owner of my clothes."—Then the Governor was pleased to be friendly with me, and permitted me to take seat.—And he made largess to them of two robes of honour and presented them with a sum in coin.—And stipulated with them that they should live together in kindness until the coming on of the Day of Fear.—Then they rose up from his hall, lifting their voices in thanks for his benefits.—But I followed them that I might know their abode, that I might supply myself of their talk.—And when we had traversed the domain of the Governor, and had come to the empty plain, one of his guards overtook me, recalling me to his

court.—So I said to Abû Zayd, "I think he does not send for me save that he may question me: now what shall I say, and in what valley shall I roam with him?" —He said, "Shew him the folly of his heart, and how I have played with his understanding, that he may know that his breeze has met with a whirlwind, that his streamlet has encountered the deep."—I said, "I fear that his anger will be kindled, and so his blaze scorch thee; or that his caprice will quicken, and so his violence come upon thee."—He said, "I am now setting off for Roha, and how should Sohayl and Soha meet together?"

Now when I was in presence of the Governor, whose hall was by this time empty, and whose austerity had cleared away, he took to describing Abû Zayd and his worth, and blaming his evil fortune.—Then he said, "I conjure thee by God, art thou not he who lent him the suit?" (dast)—I said, "No, by Him who has set thee on that cushion, (dast) I am not the owner of the suit, (dast) but thou art he against whom the game (dast) has gone."—Then his eye-balls went askance, and his cheeks reddened.—And he said, "By Allah, it never baffled me yet to expose a suspicious person, or to discover a knave.—But I never heard of a Shaykh who cheated after he donned the saintly cloak; yet, as for this one, he has deceived to the last.—Now how call you that monkey."—I said, "Abû Zayd." He said, "Abû Kayd is more fitting for him than Abû Zayd: and dost thou know where the villain is strolling to?"—I said, "He dreaded thee on account of having overstepped his bound, and he journeyed away from Bagdad at once."—He said, "May God not shorten his journey, or keep

him where he sojourns: for I never dealt with aught sharper than his cunning, or tasted aught more bitter than his fraud:—And were it not for the sacredness of his scholarship, I would urge on in search of him, until he came in sight for me to fall foul of him.—And now do I loathe that what he has done should be spread abroad in the City of Peace; so should I be dishonoured among men, and my dignity come to nought before the Imâm, and I be made a laughing-stock to gentle and mean."—Then he stipulated with me that I should not speak of what Abû Zayd had done as long as I remained a sojourner in this city.—Said Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, And I stipulated with him as one who does not equivocate, and I kept faith with him as Samuel kept it.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF THE PORTION."

This Assembly contains the "grammatical riddles" of which the author speaks in his preface. Abû Zayd, falling into the company of some refined persons who are amusing themselves in the suburbs of Bagdad, is at first despised by them for the shabbiness of his garb. But the recitation of a singer causes the conversation to turn upon the famous and never-ending controversy concerning the use of the *raf'* and the *naṣb*, or, in European terminology, the nominative and accusative case, in certain Arabic phrases. The company plunge into the dispute with all the ardour which never failed to be kindled by grammatical disquisitions; and when they can come to no agreement, Abû Zayd interposes, and gives his opinion. As they do not accept it readily, and attempt to argue with him, he at once reduces them to submission by proposing twelve enigmas, involving abstruse and technical points of Arabic grammar. No one can solve them; and Abû Zayd refuses to gratify their curiosity by giving an explanation until each one of them has made him a present. Then he leaves them, refusing to drink with them on the ground that in his

declining age he had made a vow against wine. The answers are briefly given in an appendix from the pen of Ḥarîri himself.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was in company in the portion of Ar Rabî', in the season of spring, with youths whose faces were brighter than its lights, whose dispositions were more goodly than its flowers, whose utterances were more delicate than the air of its dawns. —And through them I looked upon what would shame the flowering spring and suffice for the sounds of lutes.— And we had taken oath together for the guarding of affection and the forbidding of self-seeking; and that no one of us should hold aloof in enjoyment, or keep to himself even the smallest pleasure.—Now we had agreed together on a day whose mist had risen, whose beauty was growing, whose light cloud bade to the morning draught,—That we would amuse ourselves by going forth to one of the meadows, to pasture our eyes on the shining plots, and polish our minds by a forecasting of the rains;—So we sallied forth, and we were as the months in number, and as the two boon-companions of Jathîmeh in affection,—To a garden which had assumed its gilding and adorned itself, whose flowers were various in their kinds and hues;—And with us were the headstrong ruddy wine, and cupbearers like suns; and the singer who charms the hearer and delights him, who feasts each hearing with what it covets.—Now when we had fully taken seat, and the cups were circling to us, there intruded on us a sharp fellow, on him was an old coat:—And we frowned on him as frown the soft damsels on the gray-heads, and we felt that the purity of our day was now troubled. —But he greeted with the greeting of the intelligent;

and taking seat he opened perfume-vials of prose and verse;—But we shrank from his expansion, and hastened to roll up what he spread out; until chanted our rare singer, our charming modulator:

How long, Su'âd, wilt thou not join my cord, nor pity me for what I meet with?

I have been patient with thee until my patience is overcome, until my spirit has almost reached my throat.

But come! I am resolved to do myself right, drinking thereby to my mistress as she drinks to me;

For if union (وِصلاً) please her—then union (وِصلٌ); but if rupture —then rupture like a very divorce.

Said Al Ḥârith: Then we asked the player on the double-twisted strings why he *naṣbed* the first وِصل and *raf'ed* the second.—And he swore by the tomb of his parents that he had spoken as Sîbawayh preferred.—But the opinions of the company were divided as to the admissibility of the *naṣb* and *raf'*.—And a section said, "The *raf'* of both, that is correct;" and a part said, "Nothing is lawful but the state of *naṣb*;" while to the rest the answer was impracticable, and the clamouring kindled among them.—But that intruder showed the smilingness of one who knows a matter, though he spoke not a single word.—However, when the cries were still, and the scolded and the scolder were silent, he said, "O people, I will announce to you its interpretation, I will distinguish the sound phrase from the sick.—Verily the *raf'* and the *naṣb* of each وِصل are lawful, and an interchange of the inflection between them;—And that is according to what is left understood, and to the virtual signification which is elided in this puzzle."—Then was the company reckless in hastening to dispute with him, and in gliding

into contention with him.—But he said: Well, since ye call to me to "Come down," and ye gird yourselves for the war:

What is the word which, as ye will, is a particle that is loved, or the name of that which contains the slender milch-camel?

And what is the noun which alternates between a singular that binds, and a plural that clings?

And what is the س which, when it attaches itself, takes away heaviness and loosens the bound?

And where does the س enter and depose the regent without courtesy?

And what is that which is always *manṣûb* as a term of circumstance, while only a particle makes it *makhfûḍ?*

And what is the annexed noun which lacks one of the handles of annexion, and whose power varies between evening and morning?

And what is the regent whose last joins his first, and whose reverse effects what he effects?

And what is the regent whose deputy is more spacious than he in abode, and greater in craft, and more frequent in mention of God Most High?

And in what place do males put on the veils of women, and the ladies of the alcoves go forth with the turbans of men?

And where is the keeping of ranks necessary to the struck and the striker?

And what is the noun which gives no sense except by the addition to it of two words, or the shortening of it to two letters; and in the first case there is adhesion, and in the second compulsion?

And what is the epithet which, when it is followed

by ن, he to whom it is applied lessens in men's eyes, and is set low in reputation, and is reckoned among the simpletons, and exposes himself to dishonour?

Now these are twelve questions to match your number, to balance your disputatiousness; if ye add, I add; if ye return, I return.

Said the teller of this story: Now from these his riddles, which terrified as they poured, there came on our thoughts bewilderment and barrenness.—And when it baffled us to swim in his sea, and our talismans had yielded to his enchantment,—We changed from weariness in looking at him to the seeking of instruction from him, and from the wrong of being annoyed by him to the desire of learning of him.—But he said, "Now by Him who has sent down grammar into speech to be as salt in food, and has veiled its risings from the perceptions of the vulgar,—I will not give you a wish, I will not heal for you a pain, unless every hand endow me, and each of you distinguish me by a gift."—Then remained not one in the company but was obedient to his command, and cast to him the hidden treasure of his sleeve.—And when he had got it under his wallet-string he kindled the flame of his genius.—And then did he disclose of the secrets of his riddles and of the wonders of his puzzling, that wherewith he cleared away the rust from our understandings, that whose rising he manifested by the light of proof.—And we were astonished when we understood, and we wondered when we were answered, and we repented over what had escaped from us.—And we began to excuse ourselves with the excusing of the sagacious; and we offered to him the quaffing of the wine-cup.—But he said, "Need is not

courtesy; and as for drinking, there remains in it no sweetness for me."—Then he turned up his face morosely, and plucked away his side scornfully, and recited:

Gray hair forbids me that wherein are my joys; how then should I bring together the wine and my hands' palms?

Is the morning draught of the old wine lawful, now that the hoariness of my head lights up my morning?

I swear that wine shall never again blend with me as long as my breath cleaves to my body, and my words to my speech;

That my hand shall not deck itself with the cups of must; that I will not turn round my lot among the goblets;

That I will not set my thought to the mixed drink; that I will not go joyfully to the wine;

That I will not gather myself to the wine cooled of the north wind; that I will choose no companion, save the sober.

Hoariness blots out my merriment when he writes upon my head; hated be he for a blotting scribe!

He shines forth to blame my turning the reins to pleasure; away with him for one who shines forth but to blame!

Now were I wanton while my temple is hoary, then would my lamp be put out among the lamps of Ghassân,

A people whose disposition is the honouring of their guests; and gray hair is a guest to whom honour is due, my friend.

Said Al Ḥârith: Then he slipped away as slips the serpent, and sped with the speeding of the cloud.—And I knew then that he was the light of Serûj; the full moon of scholarship that passes through the signs of heaven.—And our end was grief at his departure and separation after he was gone.

Explanation of the Arabic subtleties and grammatical riddles which are contained in this Assembly.

As for the first part of the last verse of the song, namely—فإن وصلًا الذّ به فوصلٌ (if union please her, then union), it is like the phrase المرءُ مجزيٌّ بعمله ان خيرًا فخيرٌ وإن شرًّا فشرٌّ (Man is rewarded according to his work; if good, good, if evil, evil.) Now

Sibawayh introduced this question into his Book, and allowed four modes of inflecting it. The first and best is that you should *naṣb* the first خير and *raf'* the second, *naṣb* the first شرّ and *raf'* the second. Then would the virtual meaning be, "If his work be good then his reward is good; and if his work be evil, then his reward is evil;" for the first is *naṣbed* through being the predicate of كان, and the second is *raf'ed* through being the predicate of an elided inchoative. And in this mode, كان and its noun are elided, because the conditional particle إن (if) points to their virtual presence; and the inchoative is also elided, because the ف, which is the answer to the condition, points to it; and that is by reason that an inchoative commonly follows ف. The second mode is that you should *naṣb* both; and then the virtual meaning of the sentence is, "If his wish be good, then he is rewarded good; and if his wish be evil, then he is rewarded evil." Here the first is *naṣbed*, because it is the predicate of كان, and the second is *naṣbed* as the object of the verb's action. The third mode is that you should *raf'* both; then the virtual sense of the sentence is, "If there be good in his work, then his reward is good; and the first خير is *raf'ed* because it is the noun of كان, and the second is *raf'ed* because it is the predicate of an elided inchoative; as was shown in the exposition of the first mode. And it may be that the first خير is *raf'ed* through being the *agent* of كان; and that the كان, which receives a virtual power here, is the complete attributive verb, with the meaning "exists," or "occurs;" which would need no predicate, as in the phrase of God Most High, "If he *be* one in difficulty." Then the virtual meaning in the example would be, "If good *be*, then the reward is good:" that is, "If good exists, then the reward is good." The fourth and weakest mode is that you should *raf'* the first on the principle explained in the third case, and *naṣb* the second on that which was mentioned in the second case. Then the virtual meaning will be, "If there be good in his work, then he is rewarded good." According to this interpretation, and by the use of the virtually understood words which are here elided, runs the inflection of the verse sung in the Assembly. And among expressions of the same kind is the sentence, "The man was killed by what he killed with; if a sword, a sword; if a knife, a knife."

Now as to the word which is a particle that is loved, or the name of that which contains the slender milch camel; it is نعم. If you use it to admit the truth of what is told you, or to promise in answer to a request, then it is a particle: but if you mean by it "camels," then it is a noun: and نعم is masculine and feminine, and is a general name for camels, and for all cattle (in which last definition camels are comprised.) And among camels is comprised the حرف; which means a slender she-camel. She is called حرف, from being likened to the حرف (edge) of a sword. But it is also said that the word means a stout she-camel; through the likening of her to the حرف (ridge) of a mountain.

As for the noun which alternates between a singular that binds and a plural that clings, it is سراويل (trowsers or drawers). Some say that this is a singular form, and that its plural is سراويلات; and according to this opinion, it is a singular; and from its being gathered round the waist, he gives it the epithet of "binding." Others say, "Nay, it is a plural, and its singular form is سروال;" and, according to this opinion, it is a plural; and the meaning of the expression "clings" is, that it is not *fully declined.* Now, the reason that this kind of plural is not fully declined (and it consists of every plural whose third letter is an *elif* followed by a strengthened letter, or by two letters, or by three letters, the middle one of which is quiescent), is on account of its heaviness, and its divergence from the other plurals, inasmuch as there is no form like it among the singular nouns. And in this riddle he gives the epithet "clinging" to that which is not fully declined.

As for the ز, which, when it attaches itself, takes away heaviness, and loosens the bound; it is the ز which is affixed to the form of plural above mentioned; as in صيارفة (bankers), صياقلة (polishers); for this form of plural becomes fully declined when the ز is affixed to it; because the ز changes it to the form of singular nouns like رفاهيّة and كراهيّة; and it is thus lightened, and becomes declinable. And in this riddle he gives to that which is not fully declined the epithet of "bound," as in the former he gave it the epithet of "clinging."

As for the س, which deposes the regent without courtesy, it is that which is prefixed to the future verb, and divides it from أن,

which, before the prefixion, was one of the *instruments of nasbing*. The verb is then *raf'ed*, and the أن is changed from being a *nasber* to the verb, to being the lightened أن, used in the place of the heavy. Thus, in the sentence of God, Praise be to Him, علم أن سيكون منكم مرضى (He knows that there shall be sick among you), the virtual reading is علم انّه سيكون.

Now as to that which is *nasbed*, as a term of circumstance, while only a particle *khafds* it, it is عند, which is never *jerred* in choice speech, except by من; for the vulgar expression, ذهبتُ الي عندِه, is a mistake.

As to the annexed noun, which is deprived of one of the handles of annexion, and whose power varies between evening and morning; it is لدن. For this is one of the nouns which necessarily require annexion, and whatever noun follows it is *jerred* by it, except غدوة; for the Arabs make this *mansûb* after لدن, through the frequency with which they use it in discourse: they also *nunnate* it, that it may fully appear that it is *mansûb*, and that it is not one of the class of *jerred* nouns which are not fully declinable. Among some of the grammarians, لدن has the same meaning as عند; but the correct view is that there is a delicate difference between them; namely that the meaning of عند applies to whatever is in your possession or power, whether it be near to you or at a distance, while لدن applies only to what is in your presence and close to you.

And as for the regent, whose last joins his first, and whose reverse effects what he effects; it is يا, the reverse of which is اى; and both are among the *particles of calling*; and the effect of both upon the noun of the person called to is the same, although يا circulates more in discourse, and is of more frequent usage. Some, however, prefer that a person who is near should be called to with اى only, as he is called to with *hamzeh*.

As for the regent whose deputy is more spacious than he in abode, and greater in craft, and more frequent in mention of God Most High, it is the ب of swearing. This ب is the original particle of swearing; as is shown by its being used when the verb of swearing is expressed, as when you say أُقسم بالله (I swear by God); and by its being prefixed also to the pronoun; as when you say بكَ لا فعلنّ, (By Thee, I will do it.) Afterwards the و was

substituted for it in the oath, because they are both labial letters, and also on account of the relationship of their meanings; since the و gives the sense of union, and the ب that of adhesion, and the two meanings approach each other. Then the و, which was substituted for the ب, became more common in speech, and was more largely applied in forms of swearing; and for this reason he riddles that it is more frequent in mention of God Most High. Also the و is larger in dwelling than the ب, because the ب is prefixed only to the noun, and effects nothing but the *jerr*; while the و is prefixed to the noun, and the verb, and the particle, and sometimes it *jerrs with the oath*, and sometimes by understanding رُبَّ, and it is also ranked with the *naṣbers of the verb*, and with the *instruments of conjunction*, and for this reason he describes it by spaciousness of abode, and greatness of cunning.

And as for the place where males put on the veils of women, and the ladies of the alcoves go forth with the turbans of men; it is the first degree of the numeral, when in the state of annexion; namely, the numerals between three and ten, for they have ة in the masculine, and are without it in the feminine, as in the phrase of Him Most High, سخّرها عليهم سبع ليالٍ و ثمانية ايامٍ حُسومًا (He compelled it upon them seven nights and eight days consecutively); while everywhere else the ة is one of the distinctives of the feminine. You see how the rule of masculine and feminine is reversed in this case; so that each turns to a form that is not its own, and goes forth in the garb of the other.

As to the place where the keeping of ranks is necessary to the struck and the striker; it is when there is ambiguity between the agent and the patient, through the sign of inflection failing to be openly expressed in both or one of them. This takes place when they are both *maḳṣûr*, like موسى or عيسى; or belong to the nouns of indication, like ذاك and هذا. In such cases it is necessary, for the avoiding of ambiguity, that each of the two nouns should be kept in its proper order; so that the agent may be known by its coming first, and the patient by its following after.

As for the noun which gives no sense except by the addition to it of two words, or the shortening of it to two letters, it is مهما (whatever). About this word there are two opinions: one that it is com-

pounded of كف which means "stop," and of لا ; the second, and the correct one, is that the root of the word is لا, to which another لا was added augmentively, as it is to إن, so that the utterance became لا لا. But the succession of two words with the same utterance became troublesome to people, and they substituted ء for the first *elif*, so that the two became لاء. This word is one of the *instruments of condition and compensation*, and when you utter it the sentence is not completed, and the meaning is not seized, except by the addition of two words after it, as, "Whatever you do I will do," so that it necessarily "adheres" to a verb. But if you shorten it to the two letters كف, meaning "stop," then the meaning is intelligible, and in that case you "compel" him you are addressing to stop.

And as for the epithet which, when it is followed by ن, he to whom it is applied lessens in men's eyes, and is set low, and is reckoned among the simpletons, and exposes himself to dishonour; it is ضيف (a guest), which, when ن is added to it, changes to ضيفن, which means one who intrusively follows the guest, and who is set down as base coin when he is tested.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "OF KEREJ."

There is nothing remarkable in this Assembly. Ḥârith, being in the town of Kerej, during a severe winter, sees one day an old man naked and shivering, who crouches on the ground. He is surrounded by a crowd, and recites to them some verses on his unhappy state. The wealthy, who are standing around, pity him, and give him their furs and cloaks; and among them Ḥârith parts with a useful garment. In his speech the old man had used the phrase "the *Kâfs* of winter;" and Ḥârith, when he discovers that he is Abû Zayd, follows him, requesting to know its meaning. Abû Zayd reminds him of a verse of Ibn Sukkereh, in which seven things—all beginning with the letter *Kâf*—are spoken of as necessary in order that a winter may be passed in comfort.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I was wintering at Kerej, by reason of a debt that I was demanding, and

a needful business I was performing.—And I experienced of its fierce winter and its scorching cold, that which acquainted me with sorest torment, and kept me ever seeking warmth.—So that I quitted not my lair, and the kindling-place of my fire, except through some necessity that I was urged to, or that I might give attendance at the congregation.—Now on a day whose sky was frowning, whose mist was darkling, I was forced to sally from my shelter, through a business that troubled me: —When lo! an old man, bare of skin, showing his nakedness; and he was turbaned with a kerchief, and breeched with a napkin.—And around him was a crowd, dense in its throngings; and he was reciting, and heeded nought:

O people, nothing can announce to you my poverty
More truly than this, my nakedness in the season of cold.
So from my outward misery, judge ye
The inward of my condition, and what is hidden of my state.
And beware a change in the truce of fortune:
For know that once I was illustrious in rank,
I had command of plenty, and of a blade that severed;
My yellow coins served my friends, my lances destroyed my foes;
My humped camels mourned the morning that I made the feast.
But afterward the time bared the swords of perfidy,
And spread forth the squadrons of dark afflictions,
And ceased not to tear and wear me;
Until my habitation was razed, and my milk-flow decayed,
And my price and my song went down among men,
And I became the lean beast of poverty and need,
Naked of back, stripped of my covering,
As though I were a spindle in nakedness.
No warming is mine in Ṣinn and Ṣinnabar,
Save to stand in the sun, or get a heat at the coals.
Now is there any who is a deep sea of bounty, lord of an ample robe,
Who will cloak me either with embroidered garment or ragged coat,
Seeking the face of God, and not my thanks?

Then he said: O ye lords of wealth who trail in furred robes, he that is endowed with good let him expend; he that is able to bestow, let him bestow.—For the world is treacherous and fortune trips; ability is the visit of a vision, and opportunity a summer cloud.—For, by Allah, oft have I met winter with its *Kâfs*, and prepared its necessaries before its coming:—But to-day, Sirs, my arm is my pillow, my skin is my garment, the hollow of my hand is my dish.—So let him that is wise consider my estate, and be beforehand with the changing of the nights.—For the happy man is he who takes warning by his fellow, and makes preparation for his journey.

Thereupon it was said to him, "Thou hast displayed to us thy scholarship, now disclose to us thy pedigree."—He said, "A curse on him who boasts of mouldering bones! there is no glory but in piety and choice scholarship." Then he recited:—

By thy life, man is but the son of his own day, according as that day displays itself; he is not the son of his yesterday.

There is no boast in rotten bones; there is only the glory of him who seeks glory through himself.

Then he sat down, bowed together, and shrank shivering.—And said, "O God, thou who whelmest with thy bounty, and hast bidden us to ask of thee, send thy blessing on Moḥammed and his House, and help me against the cold and its terrors;—And appoint to me some generous man who prefers others even from his straitness, who shares even though it be but a scrap." Said the narrator: Now when he had thus disclosed a soul like 'Iṣâm's, and elegancies like Aṣma'í's, the glances of my eye began to test him, and the darts of

my side-looks to strike on him, until I perceived well that he was Abû Zayd, and that his going naked was but a noose for the prey.—But he saw secretly that my recognition had overtaken him, and he mistrusted that it would expose him.—So he said, "I swear by the shade of night and the moon, by the stars and the new moonlight, that none shall *cloak* me save one whose disposition is goodly, whose face is imbued with the dew of benevolence."—Then I understood what he meant, although the company knew not his meaning.—And I was grieved at the shivering that he suffered, and at the bristling of his skin.—So I took hold on a fur coat that was my plumage by day and my bed by night; and I stripped it off me, and said "Receive it from me."—And he failed not to draw it on while my eye still looked at it.—Then he recited:

Well done he who has clothed me with a fur coat, which shall be my protection from shivering!

He has clothed me with it, preserving my heart's blood; may he be preserved from the harm of men and Jinn!

To-day he shall deck himself with my praise; to-morrow he shall be decked with the silk of Paradise.

Said Al Ḥârith: Now when he had fascinated the hearts of the company by his diversity in excellence,—They cast to him of the lined furs and the parti-coloured coats, so many that their weight oppressed him, and scarce could he lift them.—And he departed glad of countenance in his joy, invoking a rain on Kerej.—But I followed him to a point where his mistrust disappeared, and the heaven showed clear; and I said to him, "A sharp cold was that which froze thee! But go not naked again."—He said, "Fie on thee! swiftness to blame belongs not to the just; haste not

in censuring, for it is a wrong; prosecute not that of which thou hast no knowledge,—For by Him who has given the light of hoariness, and made sweet the tomb of Ṭaybeh, had I not stripped myself I should have gone home in failure, and in emptiness of wardrobe." —Then was he restive to take flight, and veiled himself in frowning, and said, "Knowest thou not that my nature is to pass from prey to prey, and to turn from 'Amr to Zayd?—Yet I see thou now checkest me and resistest me; thou makest me to lose double of what thou didst profit me.—Then spare me (God save thee), from thy vain talk; shut on me the door of thy earnest and jest."—But I pulled him with the pulling of playfulness, and held him fast to joke with him,—And said to him, "By Allah, had I not concealed thee and covered thy imposture, thou wouldst not have gotten a gift; thou wouldst not have come off more coated than an onion.—So now recompense me for my goodness, and for the covering that I gave thee, and put over thee, either by being kind enough to restore my fur, or by making known to me the Kâfs of winter." —Then he looked at me with the look of one who wonders, and frowned with the frowning of the angry, —And said, "As for restoring the fur it is a thing as impossible as the restoring of yesterday that is past, or the dead man who is gone;—But as for the Kâfs of winter, glory to God who rusted thy mind and rent the bottle of thy storing,—Since thou hast let thyself forget what I recited to thee at Deskereh of the lines of Ibn Sukkereh:

"Winter comes and its needs to me are seven, when the rain confines me from business;

A home, a purse, a stove, a cup of wine after the roast meat, and a pleasant wife, and clothing.

Then he said, "Sure an answer that heals is better than a cloak that warms; so be content with what thou hast learnt and depart."—So I parted from him; and now my fur coat was gone to my sorrow, and I was in a state of shivering all the winter.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH ASSEMBLY, CALLED "THE SPOTTED."

This Assembly presents another of those exercises of ingenuity in which the author delights. Al Ḥârith, being in the town or district of Ahwâz in a state of great poverty, determines to seek his fortune elsewhere. On the road he comes upon a tent whose wealthy owner, attended by his slaves, is reposing during a halt. The stranger invites him to rest himself, and Al Ḥârith soon discovers that he is Abû Zayd. He inquires the cause of this sudden prosperity, and is informed that it was produced by the improvisation of an elegant address or composition, the merits of which a great personage had thus munificently rewarded. Al Ḥârith, with his usual literary curiosity, desires to hear it; but Abû Zayd will consent only on condition that his friend shall first accompany him to Sûs, the ancient Susa, which is distant a day's journey from Ahwâz. Al Ḥârith consents, and Abû Zayd detains him in the city for a month on various pretences. At last, when Al Ḥârith will no longer stay, the adventurer tells how he had been oppressed with debt, and been delivered from it, and loaded with presents, by the Governor of Ṭûs, in Khorasan, in reward for an eulogistic composition, in which the alternate letters were pointed and unpointed. He asks Al Ḥârith whether he would prefer a sum of money or a copy of this "spotted" composition. His friend chooses the latter, and Abû Zayd dictates it, not failing to accompany it with a present to relieve his necessities.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, related: I descended at the two markets of Ahwâz, clothed in the garb of need. —And I delayed there a space enduring adversity,

passing sombre days,—Until I looked upon the lengthening of my stay as if it were one of the hurts of vengeance,—And I viewed the city with the eye of him that hates, and I parted from it as one parts from the mouldering camp-ruin.—And I set forth from its streamlet, girded up of skirt, spurring to the abundant waters; —Until when I had journeyed from it two stations, and was distant the march of two nights, there came to my sight a pitched tent and a kindled fire.—Then I said, "I will go to them; perchance I may quench thirst or find guidance at the fire."—And when I had arrived at the shadow of the tent I saw some fair boy-servants, and furniture which thou wouldest gaze at, and an old man; on him was noble apparel, and by him was newly plucked fruit,—And I greeted him and then went aside from him.—But he laughed to me and made kindly his answer towards me, and said, "Wilt thou not take seat by one whose fruit is choice, whose pleasantry charms?"—Then I took my seat to get the prize of conversing with him, not to swallow down what was before him.—And as soon as he unveiled his accomplishments and bared his teeth, I knew that he was Abû Zayd by the beauty of his choice sayings, and the ugliness of those yellow teeth.—And we knew each other then, and two joys compassed me in that hour.—Nor could I learn by which I was purer in rejoicing and more perfect of delight;—Whether it was at his dawning forth from the darkness of his journeys, or at the plenty of his dwelling after its dearth.—Then my soul yearned that I should break the seal of his secret and enter into the cause of his prosperity.—So I said to him, "Whence is thy returning, and whither is thy

going onward, and how have thy wardrobes been filled?" —He said, "As for my coming it is from Ṭûs; and as for my destination, it is Sûs; and as for the wealth which I have reached, it is from an Address which I improvised."—Then I begged him that he would lay before me his secret, and rehearse his Address to me.—He said, "The war of Al Basûs was a less thing than what thou desirest, unless, indeed, thou wilt accompany me to Sûs."

So I followed him thither perforce, and I attached myself to him there a month.—And he, he watered me to the full with the cups of beguiling and made me to bear the bridle of expectation;—Until when my breast was straitened and my patience overcome, I said to him, "There remains to thee no pretext, nor to me aught that can divert me.—To-morrow I shall take omen of the raven of separation, and saddle away from thee with the shoes of Ḥonayn."—He said, "God forbid that I should break promise with thee or thwart thee! I have not deferred to relate to thee save that I might make thee stay.—But since thou hast doubted concerning my promise, and the suspicion of ill treatment urges thee to depart from me,—Listen to the story of my lengthened journey, and add it to the *Tales of Pleasure after Pain*."—I said, "Go on, how long is thy tether! how various are thy wiles!"—He said: Know that the frowning time cast me to Ṭûs, and then was I poor and laden; I had not the sprout or the split of a date-stone.—So the bareness of my hands made me resort to haltering myself with debt;—And I took credit by evil chance from one who was hard of nature;—For I fancied it would be easy to find

a market for my poetry, and I enlarged in spending;—And recovered not until that debt burdened me, whose due attached to me, whose claimant beset me.—Then was I bewildered at my state, and showed my creditor my difficulty;—But he believed not my poverty and drew not off from worrying me;—Nay, he was instant in demanding and obstinate in carrying me to the Kadi;—And as often as I humbled myself to him in speech, and besought of him the grace of the generous,—And would dispose him to show mercy to me by lenity, or to wait for me till competence,—He said, "Set not thy desire on being waited for while thou holdest fast the bright gold;—For, by thy existence, thou seest not the paths of deliverance ere thou show me the meltings of the pure ore."—And when I saw the sharpening of his contention, and that there was no refuge to me from his hand, I made a quarrel with him, and then I assaulted him,—That he might carry me up to the Governor having authority over offences, not to the Judge of civil wrongs.—And this was by reason of what had reached me of the eminence of the Governor and his virtue, and the severity of the Kadi and his meanness.—Now when we were present at the gate of the ruler of Ṭûs, I perceived that I should have nor hurt nor harm.—So I called for ink-flask and paper, and composed for him a *Spotted* Address, and this it it:

The qualities of our Lord are loved, and at his courtyard there is abiding;—And nearness to him is as gifts, and farness from him as destruction;—And his friendship is as pedigree, and his estrangement as calamity;—His sword's edge is sharp, and the stars of his virtue gleam.—His continence adorns, and the rectitude of

his road is plain.—His understanding turns and tries, and his fame goes east and west.

The ruler, the intelligent; surpassing, excelling; understanding, ingenious; impatient of baseness, loathing it;

Replacing, consuming; distinguished, incomparable; illustrious, virtuous; quick-witted, fastidious;

Marvellous when he discourses; able when the stir of ill befals, and the dreaded calamity grows mighty.

The chaplets of his honour are self-strung, and the rain-storm of his largess showers;—The gift of his hand flows freely, while avarice from his heart sinks away.—The teat of his liberality is milked, and the gold of his chests is spoiled.—He whom his band gathers to itself prospers and overcomes; the merchant of his gate makes gain by beguiling him.—He refrains from wronging the innocent, and is free from the foulness of the transgressor.—He unites his gentleness with dignity, and turns aside from the path of the niggardly.—He is not given to leap at the opportunity of evil, but abstains with the abstaining of the righteous.

And therefore is he loved, and his continence merits the infatuation he inspires, since its pure essence beguiles all.

His qualities are bright, and gleam; and his arrow is an arrow which overcomes when thou shootest against it.

He is gentle, he is cheerful; one who makes good when his friend slips, nor is there any doubt of his desert.

Not miserly, nay, but bountiful; open when he is solicited; one who goes forth, his gate keeps him not close.

When want bites, he breaks the edge of its biting by his succour, and its tooth falls out.

And it is fitting that whoever is wise and understanding, whoever is near and far, should submit himself to the hero of the time, the restorer of the palsied.—For since he sucked the breast of his fostering, he has been distinguished by the abundance of his shower.—He

raises the fallen, and comforts him; if he helps he gladdens; if he contends in honour, he routs his adversary, and returns with a clear right.—He prepares fatigue for him who shall rule after him; he is lauded as often as men move him to kindness, or prove him in deed; he crowns his virtues with the love of his suppliants.

May he never become void of gladness, may the shadow of his prosperity be lengthened.

For he is virtuous in the sight of whoever contemplates the shining of his stars.

He adorns the graces of his culture by clothing himself with the fear of his Lord.

And may there prosper my Lord his gain of honours, firmly rooted and large, and his excelling in benefits that are perfect, that publish themselves:—And may the helping of his servant with a portion from his abundance accord with the pious offerings of His Honour:—For his servant is a child of the noble, though a wanderer from dearth; one wounded by calamities that have scarred him, who strings chaplets that voyage afar.—When he surges to the harangue there is found none to speak like him; for Ḳoss would then be as Bâḳil.—For when he embellishes thou wouldst say, "Garments of Yemen have been embroidered," thou wouldst think that a garden had sprouted.—This is so, and then also his draught is but a draining, and his food is borrowed; his dawn is the glooming, and his cloak is worn out.—And now does he quake at the raging of a tyrannous creditor, who harasses him because of a debt that attaches to him.—But if my Lord will mercifully avert him from me by the gifts of his hand, he will belt himself with glory that surpasses, and come off with the reward of loosing

me from the chain.—May the qualities of his disposition never fail to aid whoever watches the promise of his lightning-cloud.—By the grace of the Lord, who is without beginning, who liveth now, and is without end.

Said Abû Zayd: Now when the Governor had discerned the pearls of my Address, and caught a glance of the secret committed to it,—He made sign at once for the paying of my debt, and decided what was between my adversary and myself.—Then he appropriated me for his ostentation, and distinguished me by his preference.—And I remained a few years prospering in guestship with him, and pasturing in the oasis of his bounty,—Until, when his gifts had overwhelmed me, and his gold had lengthened my skirt, I contrived to depart in the fair condition that thou seest.

Said Al Ḥârith: Then I said to him, "Thanks to Him who destined to thee the meeting with the kind one, the noble, and delivered thee by him from the pressure of thy creditor."—He said, "Praise to God for happiness of fortune and freedom from the contentious adversary."—Then he said, "Which is more pleasing to thee; that I should share with thee of the gift, or present thee with the Spotted Address?"—I said, "The dictation of the Address will be more pleasing to me." He said, "And that too, by thy Truth, is the lighter upon me: for truly the gift of that which goes in at the ears is easier than the gift of that which comes out of the sleeves."—But then it was as if he scorned the meanness, and grew ashamed, for he gave me the Address and a present together.—Thus I gained from him two lots, and parted from him with two booties, and returned to my home, cool of eye, through having gotten both the Address and the coin.

NOTES TO THE ASSEMBLIES OF AL ḤARÎRI.

PREFACE.

The opening prayer or invocation which, according to the custom of Moslem authors, is prefixed to the book, begins with an elaborate series of antitheses, the purport of which is to ask deliverance from the opposite faults of redundancy and poverty of style, and the opposite dangers which arise from the indulgence or hostility of critics. This kind of exordium is always composed with especial pains by a writer who aspires to produce a work of merit; and it has, generally, more than the usual share of the rhetorical artifices, which are to be met with in Arabic writings. The prayer and preface of Ḥarîri are, perhaps, the most highly elaborated part of his work, and have always been esteemed as a model of composition. Having supplicated deliverance both from excess and defect of diction, and from undue favour and undue blame, the author asks to be guarded from ambiguity of expression as much as from actual error; a request not unnecessary in a work which deals so much with the niceties of language, and seeks to exhibit them by plays on words (تجنيس), by contrasting words that differ only in the diacritical points (تصحيف), or in the inversion of the order of the letters (قلب), or else by bringing together the widely different meanings that can be borne by various forms of the same root. After this the author prays for the moral qualities which shall assist him in producing an excellent work, and one which shall not endanger his position by giving offence to the powerful. The prayer concludes by the due invocation of a blessing upon the Prophet and his House. The Commentator whom I shall continually cite in these notes is Abû 'l ʿAbbâs Aḥmed ibn ʿAbd al Mu'min al Ḳaysî ash Sherîshi, so called from having been born at Xeres in Andalusia. This

Commentator observes that the particular form of exordium used by Ḥarîri, with its antithetical clauses, was originated by ʿAmr al Jâhiẓ, in his book called البيان والتبيان. Sherîshi gives an extract from the preface to this work, to show the closeness of Ḥarîri's imitation.

Perspicuity—enunciation.—The distinction between *bayân* and *tibyân* is that the former is applied to perspicuity of language, by which the meaning, when conceived by the speaker, is rendered clear to the person addressed; while the latter, as indicated by its form, is applied to the mental process by which ideas are separated and made distinct in the intellect of the speaker, so as to be capable of communication. The one, says the Commentator, is the work of the tongue, the other of the mind. Sherîshi says, "بيان proceeds from you to another; تبيان proceeds from you to yourself." Thus the Creator may with propriety be supplicated to "teach" the one, which is the mere art of eloquence or perspicuous expression, while he "inspires" the other. The obstacle to بيان is تعقيد or obscurity of expression, which arises, according to Jorjâni (Taʿrîfât, p. 64, edition of Flügel, Leipsic, 1845), from a fault in the disposition of words, through inversion or elision, or else from the use of words in unusual significations, without due care to prepare the mind of the hearer.

We take refuge with thee.—A common form of deprecation among Moslems derived from the versicles which form the last two chapters of the Koran. "I take refuge with the Lord of Mankind," and "I take refuge with the Lord of the Dawn."

Region—domain.—سوق is literally the market street of a town, and خطط, plural of خطة, places marked out for building, as the خطط of Kufa and Basra.

Succour or Divine Guidance.—توفيق is defined in the Taʿrîfât of Jorjâni as the power by which God makes the actions of his servants agreeable to his will.

Mistake.—زيغ is the turning away or deviation from the right path. Compare Koran iii. 5.

That we may be secure from slanders of the tongue.—Literally, "that we may be free from the cuttings of tongues." *i.e.* from what tongues may utter, and, as it were, cut off and heap up against us like reaped corn. In this the author alludes to a traditional expression of Moḥammed. Says Sherîshi, "He refers to the Tradition of Mu'âth, son of Jebel, who relates, "I said, *O Apostle of God, are we punished for what we speak?* And he answered, *Thy mother be bereft of thee, Mu'âth; is there anything that will prostrate men on their faces in the fire of hell more than the cuttings of their tongues?*" The expression ثكلتك امّك, it may be observed, is a playful one, indicating good will and fondness, rather than enmity, thus resembling لا ابا لك or قاتلك الله.

Make us not a morsel to the devourer.—One who devours the honour or character of another. Said the Prophet: "When I was lifted up (to heaven in the night-journey) I passed by people who had nails of brass, with which they tore their faces and breasts. And I said, 'Who are these, Gabriel?' He said, 'These are they who devoured mankind, and assailed their honour.'"

The venture of Hope.—Hope is here compared to the venture or merchandise with which the favour of God is sought.

Approaching thee through the merits.—For the signification of وسيلة, see Bayḍâwi at Koran v. 39. The epithet of Intercessor, applied to Moḥammed, seems in opposition to Koran vi. 51 and 69; where it is said that on the Day of Judgment, man shall have no Intercessor but God. From the influence of Christian doctrine a character somewhat resembling that of the Messiah came to be attributed by the Moslems to the founder of their religion.

Set the seal to the Prophets, or closed the series of them. The twenty-five principal prophets, of whom Moḥammed is the last and greatest, are Adam, Noah, Enoch, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Lot, Hûd, Ṣâliḥ, Sho'ayb, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Job, Thû 'l Kefl, Jonah, Elijah, Joshua, Zacharias, John, Jesus, Moḥammed.

For Hûd, see Koran vii. 63; xi. 52; xxvi. 139: for Ṣâliḥ, vii. 71; xi. 64; xxvi. 142: for Sho'ayb, who is made the father-in-law of Moses, vii. 83; xi. 85—98, etc.; for Thû 'l Kefl, xxi. 85; xxxviii. 48. These twenty-five are mentioned in the Koran, but many others are acknowledged to have had the gift of prophecy, including the whole line of the Hebrew prophets. On the subject of the Prophets, consult the Traditions of Al-Bokhâri, section of "The prophets," Vol. 2, p. 330, Krehl's edition. For the prophets who were "endowed with resolution," see Baydâwi on Koran xlvi. 34.

To the highest heaven. — On the word عِلِّيُّون, there is a diversity of opinion. It is variously said to be the place where the works of the good are gathered together; a name of the angels; the seventh Heaven; the right column of the throne of God, and the Lotus-tree of Heaven. The disputations on this subject have arisen from the use of the word, Koran lxxxiii. 18, 19. *The book of the just is in 'Illîyûn. What shall teach thee what is 'Illîyûn? It is a book marked with letters. Those who approach to God behold it.*"

It is the word of a noble envoy.—In this passage Harîri, quoting the Koran, erroneously applies to the Prophet a title which is really given to the Angel Gabriel. The Koran being the word of God revealed to the Prophet by Gabriel, could not be said to be the word of the Prophet: indeed whenever it is quoted, the phrase used is, "The Most High has said." Thus, though Mohammed's chief title is the Envoy or Apostle of God, it must here be taken to apply to Gabriel, as, indeed, is most in accordance with the sense of the passage in the Koran, where the Prophet swears to his fellow-citizens of Mecca that his revelations proceed from on high. The passage is in Sura lxxxi. verse 17. Harîri, it is said, being convinced of his mistake, afterwards substituted a verse from the 21st Sura: "We have sent thee only out of mercy to the world," words which indubitably refer to Mohammed. As for the phrase in the 81st Sura, Baydâwi distinctly declares that it applies to Gabriel, who spoke what he received from God. He also reads ثَمَّ rather than ثُمَّ.

On his House.—The term آل النبي is applied, according to some, to his followers, whether relations or not, or to his relations, whether followers or not; according to others, to the people of his religion. Ash Shâfi'î being asked who were the آل of the Prophet, answered "all pious persons." But in a Tradition, in which it is said that the poor-rates are prohibited to him and to his آل, by this is meant those to whom was appropriated the fifth (خُمس الله) of the spoils instead of the poor-rates, and these were the genuine descendants of Hâshim, and Al Muṭṭalib. (Lane): whom also consult respecting the meaning and grammatical construction of the word. According to Sherîshi there are instances of its prefixion to the pronoun in poetry and eloquent discourse.

And now.—At this point the author concludes his invocation, and proceeds to the subject of his discourse. The phrase و بعد or امّا بعد, is attributed by the Arabs to Ḳoss, Bishop of Najrân, an eloquent preacher of the time of Moḥammed; the meaning of which tradition probably is, that Ḳoss first made popular this kind of introductory invocation, which would thus seem to have been adopted by the Moslems from the Christian Church. The Arabs, however, also fable this usage to have originated with David. See commentary on phrase فصل الخطاب, pages 27 and 446 of De Sacy's Ḥarîri; and Baydâwi on Koran xxxviii. 19.

To that learning.—I have used various words in different places to express the meaning of ادب. The original meaning is Discipline of the mind, or Culture leading to moral excellence and good manners, but it is conventionally used to express what we should term scholarship, or literary skill; the chief education of the Arabs being in the use of their own language,—correctness and eloquence in which became the test of politeness and gentility. علم الادب, according to Hajji Khalfeh, cited in Lane's Lexicon, is "the science by which one guards against error in the language of the Arabs, with respect to words and with respect to writing."

The Assemblies.—Of the literary meaning of the word Ma-

kâmeh, I have spoken in the Introduction. The exact signification is a "standing," or "place of standing," and it is equivalent to مجلس, since the people who listen to the narrative "stand," or "sit" about the speaker.

Badî' az Zemân.—A summary of what is known of the origination of the kind of composition called the Maḳâmeh is given by De Sacy in his notes to the Maḳâmehs of this author, which he has inserted in his *Chrestomathie Arabe.* As I have spoken of him in the Introduction, it will be only necessary here to mention the few incidents of his life which have been preserved. His name was Abû 'l Faḍl Aḥmed Ibn al Ḥosayn; his life is related by Ibn Khallikân, and an account of him by Abû'l Manṣûr ath Tha'labî is given in the commentary of Sherîshi. Ibn Khallikân says "The *ḥâfiz*, Abû 'l Faḍl Aḥmed Ibn al Ḥosayn Ibn Yaḥya Ibn Sa'îd al Hamadâni is author of some beautiful epistles and excellent Maḳamehs, which Al Ḥarîri took as a model for his, framing them on the same plan, and imitating the manner of their author, in whose footsteps he walked. Al Hamadâni was eminent for his knowledge of pure and correct Arabic, in which he cited, as his masters, Ibn Fâris, author of the *Mujmil*, and others. He dwelt at Herat, a city in the province of Khorasan." The biographer then gives some specimens of his style, abounding in conceits which are likely to meet with less admiration from Europeans than from the poet's countrymen, as, for instance, the following, taken from a long poem of his composition:—

The gush of the shower were like thee (in thy liberality), did it, in smiling, pour forth gold. Fortune were like thee, did it not deceive; the sun, did he speak; the lion, were he not hunted; the sea, were his waters fresh.

"He died," continues Ibn Khallikân, "of poison, at Herat, A.H. 398 (A.D. 1008). I have since found, however, the following note, written at the end of his epistles, which have been collected by the *ḥâkim* Abû Sa'îd 'Abd ar Raḥmân Ibn Moḥammed Ibn Dôst, 'The author died at Herat, on Friday, 11th of the second Jumâda 398 (February, A.D. 1008).' On this

the *ḥâkim* observes, 'I have been assured by persons of good authority, that he fell into a lethargy, and was buried with precipitation. He recovered when shut up in the tomb, and his cries having been heard that night, his grave was opened, and he was found dead from fright, with his hand grasping his beard.'"

In the foregoing extract from Ibn Khallikân I have followed the translation of M. McGuckin de Slane, which I shall always use when I do not translate from the original. It is much to be wished that this excellent translation were completed.

Ath Tha'labi, after giving Badî' many titles of admiration, speaks of his wondrous memory and his powers of improvisation. He could repeat, without altering a letter, a lengthy poem which he had heard but once, or four or five leaves of a book; he could compose a *ḳaṣîdeh* or a *risâleh* on a given subject, or write what was proposed to him, beginning with the last verse and ending with the first; he could turn prose into verse or verse into prose; when a number of rhymes were given him he could fit them to verses; he could improvise in any given metre "without swallowing his spittle or drawing his breath." He came to the court of Sâḥib Ibn 'Abbâd (see De Sacy's Chrestomathie, Vol. II. p. 57), and received great kindness from him. He settled in Nisabûr in the year 382, and there it was that he composed 400 Maḳamehs on mendicity and similar subjects, of which he made Abû 'l Fatḥ, of Alexandria, the hero. (I may say that my manuscript gives the reading كدية, suggested by De Sacy. It may be noticed, however, that his reading بحلبا ought to be بحلبا, Chrest. Arabe, III. 259). The occasion of composing his Maḳâmehs was as follows: A certain Abû Bekr Ibn al Ḥosayn Ibn Dorayd had composed forty stories, of his own invention, using the style of the Arabs of the Ignorance, full of rare and strange phrases; and Badî', wishing to rival him, composed four hundred similar pieces, of which the chief object was to please the listener by a display of literary eloquence and learning. Some of these are of considerable length, while others do not reach ten lines. Though it is admitted that the Maḳâ-

mehs of Ḥarîri are artistically superior, yet it is claimed for Badî' that he surpassed all the authors of his own time, and for this reason he received the *laḳab* or sobriquet by which he is known. Indeed, in the time of Ath Tha'labi, the supremacy was doubtful between them; for one scholar, being asked which was the greater, replied, "Ḥarîri was never called the Wonder even of a day; how then should he be equal to the Wonder of the Time?" Another superiority claimed for Al Hamadâni is that his compositions were really improvised, instead of being produced laboriously and at leisure, like those of Ḥarîri.

Al Hamadâni, like other Eastern poets, was fond of wandering from place to place. After many travels he settled at Herat, where he married the daughter of a rich and powerful man, named Abû 'Ali Ḥosayn al Khoshnâbi, and there he died at the age of forty, but whether under the circumstances mentioned by Ibn Khallikân may, perhaps, be doubted.

De Sacy says, "Il y a le plus grand rapport entre Hamadâni et Ḥarîri, soit pour le choix des sujets et des pensées, soit pour la manière de les exprimer: mais les séances de Hamadâni sont beaucoup plus courtes que celles de Ḥarîri, et par-là même peut être méritent-elles quelque préférence: on y sent moins l'affectation d'employer tout à la fois toutes les richesses de la langue et toutes les ressources de la rhétorique. On ne peut nier cependant qu'il n'y ait plus d'art dans celles de Ḥarîri."

Whatever may have been the real merits of the two writers, the taste of their countrymen has definitely decided in favour of Ḥarîri, whose work has been for seven hundred years the delight of learned men, while that of Al Hamadâni is now but little known.

In which he had referred the composition to Abû 'l Fath, of Alexandria.—Ḥarîri again alludes to the priority of Badî', and asserts his own superiority to him in the Forty-seventh Assembly, by putting into the mouth of Abû Zayd:

Have thy eyes e'er seen the like of me,
Who draw every bolt by my magic, and captivate every intellect by my charm?

If the Alexandrian preceded me,
Know that the dew precedes the shower, yet the shower's excellence belongs not to the dew.

Obscure, not known, etc.—An allusion to grammatical terms. See Alfîyeh of Ibn Mâlik, line 52.

Who joins even two words, etc.—It is said that he who writes well exposes himself to envy and detraction, and he who writes ill to ridicule and insult.

As a wood-gatherer by night.—One who gathers wood by night may be bitten by a snake or stung by a scorpion; so he that is loquacious, or a voluminous writer, may utter something that will bring him trouble. This proverb is ascribed to Aktham Ibn Ṣayfi, an elder of the Benû Temîm, in the early days of Moḥammed. A poet says:—

Guard thy tongue, O Man, lest it kill thee, for it is a serpent.
How many an one is there in the grave, slain by his tongue, whom his rivals had shunned to meet in the fight! See Arabum Proverbia, ii. 671, Freytag's edition.

Who musters footmen and horsemen together.—These words are addressed to Iblîs by God, Koran xvii. 66, with the meaning, "Collect against mankind thy forces, or threaten them with thy forces, riding and on foot;" and thus may be used to signify an impious or abortive effort. Or they may be explained as applying to a confused and unsuccessful production, since a band of mixed horse and foot is but a disorganised crowd.

Fifty Assemblies, etc.—Ḥarîri here describes the nature of his compositions. Not only are verses of the Koran freely introduced, but the whole language is tinged with allusions to it which are almost imperceptible to the European, but which are readily caught by a Moslem, who knows the sacred work by heart. *Metonymy* (كناية) is the use of indirect expressions, as though you should say, *Such an one is great in the ashes of his pot*, meaning that he is given to hospitality,—Ta'rîfât, p. 197.) Of the *Arab proverbs* a great number are to be found in Maydâni, and the source and original application of others are given by various commentators. To follow Ḥarîri in this department of his boundless learning has always been one of the hardest tasks

of those who have devoted themselves to his work. References to the most important of them will be found in these notes. The *scholarly elegancies* or subtleties are to be found in the Sixth, Twenty-sixth, Twenty-eighth, and Twenty-ninth Assemblies, where the merit of the composition consists in the use of words with or without pointed letters; in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth, where phrases or a whole composition may be read either backwards or forwards; in the Twenty-Third, where a part of each verse may be removed, without spoiling sense or metre; in the Forty-sixth, where several of these ingenious displays are united. The *Grammatical riddles* are represented in the Twenty-Fourth, where Abû Zayd puzzles his companions by twelve subtle questions. The decisions dependent on the use of a word in two different senses are instanced in the Thirty-second, and akin to this are the enigmas or conundrums which appear in some of the other Assemblies. The *addresses, orations, exhortations,* and *jests* are too numerous to be specified.

I change the pasture.—i.e., I turn from grave to gay, from dignified to lightsome style. The Arabs divide the herbage on which the camel feeds into خُلَّة, which means the sweet kind, and حمض, that in which there is saltness; on the latter the camels feed in the hot season, and it makes them drink. If they have it not they become lean. The former is called the bread of the camel, and the latter the fruit; and the word is used metaphorically, to express the refreshing of the reader by a change of incident and discourse.

And of the poetry of others.—The Assembly of Ḥolwân is the Second, and that of Kerej the Twenty-fifth.

The father of its virginity.—Father is here used as we should use *Lord*: the father of a poem's virginity is he who first broaches or originates it. Compare Sixth Assembly, "Who can deflower a virgin composition;" also Sixteenth, "And deflower virgins of it."

Of its sweet and its bitter,—i.e., of all of it. Compare a verse quoted at page 678, De Sacy's Ḥarîri.

Ḳodâmeh.—Abû 'l Faraj Ibn Ja'far Ibn Ḳodâmet Ibn Ziyâd, a

scribe of Bagdad, eminent for purity of composition. He is said to have lived in the time of Muḳtadir b'illah.

And excellently said one.—The author of these lines was the amatory poet ʿAdî Ibn ar Ruḳâʿ. They relate to a lover, who hears a turtledove lamenting the loss of its mate, upon which he also laments the absence of his mistress. He then addresses himself with the words quoted, the meaning of which is that the merit of his verses is lessened by the dove having set him the example.

Although a translator does not necessarily concern himself with the technicalities of the original work, yet as this volume is intended rather for the student in Arabic than the general reader, I shall make no apology for dwelling occasionally in these notes on a subject respecting which there is little information to be found in commentators; I mean the prosody of the verses introduced throughout the Assemblies. Of this branch of learning, which has been especially elaborated by the Arab grammarians, I have made mention in the Introduction. An acquaintance with the metres, and the habit of reading the lines in accordance with them, are not only necessary for the enjoyment of Ḥarîri's melodious and plaintive verse, but enable the student the more readily to seize the meaning of the numberless parallel passages and *shawâhid* which are introduced into the commentary, and which are often ill-written and insufficiently vowelled. Less attention has been paid to the subject by European scholars than might have been expected; and the Arabs, who detect the metre at once and do not need artificial help, generally pass it by without notice.

The verses beginning فلو قبل are in the بحر طويل, the most common of the old metres. In the Ḥamâseh the greater part of the pieces belong to this metre or to the وافر, بسيط and كامل; the others, though known, not having been in very common use till a later period. The طويل belongs to the first circle (دائرة المُختَلِف), so called from being composed of five-lettered and seven-lettered feet (خماسيّة and سباعيّة). To this circle belong the three metres طويل, مديد, and بسيط, and two others only used by later

authors; the مُستطيل, which is the طويل reversed, and the ممتدّ, which is the مديد reversed. The first circle consists of the first two primitive feet فَعُوْلُن (that is a وتد مجموع + a سبب خفيف), and مفاعيلن (that is a وتد مجموع + سببين خفيفين) twice repeated, and the original طويل is of the measure,

فَعُوْلُنْ مَفاعِيلُنْ فعولن مفاعيلن فعولن مفاعيلن فعولن مفاعيلن

This عروض (last foot of first hemistich) is, however, I believe, not found; the مفاعيلن being invariably مقبوض, that is losing its quiescent fifth letter, and becoming مُفاعلُن. To this عروض there are four اضراب or closes of the second hemistich. The first is صحيح retaining the normal مفاعيلن. The second ضرب suffers قبض like the عروض, and this is the metre quoted by Ḥarîri. The other two اضراب to this عروض consist of one فعولنْ to محذوف and one مفاعيلْ to مقصور. There is also an عروض محذوفة in some use. (It must be mentioned that حذف is the dropping of the سبب خفيف at the end of a foot, and قصر the dropping of the last letter of a سبب خفيف at the end of a foot, and the making quiescent the moved letter before it).

The metre of the lines quoted is, accordingly—

فَعُوْلُن مَفاعيلُن فعولن مفاعلن فعولن مفاعيلن فعولن مفاعلن

But it will be remarked that بكيتُ, in these lines, is of the measure فعولُ; that is, as we should say, the last syllable is short instead of long, and the same licence takes place twice in the next line. This brings us to the consideration of the licences allowable in طويل, among which are, according to the prosodists, two of the kind called زحاف, namely, of the kind which affects the second letter of the سبب. The first of these licences is قبض, which we have seen affects the closing foot of each hemistich; it may also affect both فعولُن and مفاعيلن, whenever they occur, striking out the quiescent fifth letter of each; and making the former فعولُ, as in the verses before us. Of its effect on مفاعيلن, there will be many instances as we proceed. The other licence is كفّ, which is the dropping of the quiescent seventh

letter of a foot; by which, in this metre, مفاعيلُن becomes مفاعيلُ, a licence very common among the old writers. It must be borne in mind, however, that the same foot cannot suffer both قبض and كفّ; thus, there can be no such foot as مفاعلُ. This exclusion of one licence by the other is called مُعاقبة. Other peculiarities in this metre may be noticed, but the foregoing are the most important.

Scratched up its death with its hoof.—An Arab found a ram in the desert, but had no knife to kill it with. The ram, in scratching the ground, uncovered one. Hence the proverb applied to a man who furnishes the means of his own destruction. Freytag's Arabum Proverbia, ii. 359.

He who cut off his nose with his own hand.—This is, perhaps, an allusion to Ḳoṣayr, who thus avenged the death of his master, Jathîmet al Abrash on Queen Zebbâ. An account of this stratagem will be given in the notes to the Twenty-seventh Assembly, under the words, "It was for a cause that Ḳoṣayr cut off his nose." Another explanation is that it refers to a man who, having a razor in his hand, wished to wipe his nose, and cut it off by accident.

The chief losers, etc.—A quotation from Koran, xviii. 103.

Fables which relate to brutes and lifeless objects.—Fables, like those of Æsop and Loḳmân, or the fables of Bidpai, known under the name of Kalîleh wa Dimneh. Such writings, which belong to an order of great antiquity in the East, as may be learnt even from the Old Testament, were always highly esteemed, even by the strictest professors of religion, as conveying wise morals, and were distinguished by them from idle poetry, and stories of love or adventure. An instance of the application of this kind of fable to the highest and most mystical doctrines is to be found in the Mantiḳ Aṭ Ṭayr of the Persian poet Farîd ad Dîn ʿAṭṭâr, who wrote in the age succeeding Ḥarîri. Sherîshi gives instances of the use of fables by eminent men, one of them being the Prophet himself. The beautiful moral allegories of Azz ad Dîn al Muḳaddasi, edited by M. Garcin de Tassy, under

the name of "Les Oiseaux et les Fleurs," are fine specimens of this kind of composition.

Yet am I content.—Metre ṭawîl, as in the preceding lines.

THE FIRST ASSEMBLY.

Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm.—The use of this name and that of Abû Zayd, by the author, is explained by Sherîshi, who is confirmed by Ibn Khallikân, in his life of Ḥarîri. It is said that Ḥârith and Hammâm are the "truest," that is the most justly applicable of names. A Tradition of Moḥammed, concerning the naming of children, is recorded, in which it is said "The most acceptable names to God are ʿAbd Allah and ʿAbd-ar-Raḥmân; the truest are Al Ḥârith and Hammâm, and the most hateful Ḥarb and Murrah." (Abû Murrah is a *kinyeh* for the devil). The reason for calling these names the "truest" is that there is no one who is not a Ḥârith, that is, who does not labour after gain for his living; and no one who is not a Hammâm, that is, who has not his anxieties. The names were accordingly adopted by Ḥarîri to signify a common ordinary mortal, in accordance with the precedent set by Badiʿ az Zemân. Under the name of Al Ḥârith, son of Hammâm, the author is supposed to have signified himself, and for this reason he makes Ḥârith a native of Basra. The name Abû Zayd is either the real name of a personage whom Ḥarîri had met with, or it is taken to signify an elderly man generally; Zayd being an ordinary name, and the Father of Zayd the ordinary father or elder. In confirmation of this view, it is noted that Abû Zayd is continually spoken of as advanced in years. The use of these allegorical names is common among Arabs, their own ordinary names having, generally, a meaning. An instance of such a descriptive name is furnished by the philosophical romance of Abû Jaʿfar ibn Ṭofayl, whose solitary hero bears the name of Ḥayy ibn Yaḳẓân, the Living, Son of the Awakened. It may be

remarked that Ḥârith is the Greek Aretas: compare 2 Corinthians xi. 32.

Ṣan'â of Yemen.—Ṣan'â is thus specified by the author to distinguish it from another place of the same name, near Damascus. Ṣan'â the capital of Yemen, the seat of the Himyaritic kings, called Tobba', and afterwards, for a time, of the Abyssinian conquerors, was one of the most noted cities in the early times of Arab history, and preserved its importance as a seat of trade and manufacture in the days of Ḥarîri. A legend ascribes its foundation to Shem, son of Noah, who, after his father's death, journeyed southward, until he came to the first climate, and found Yemen the most agreeable country, and the site of Ṣan'â the most favoured district. He was led by the flight of a bird to the place where he laid the foundations of the Ghomdân, or palace of San'â. Descending to more historical times, we find it related that the Tabâbi'ah established themselves successively at Mareb, Ẓafâr and Ṣan'â. The Ghomdân, the most magnificent edifice in ancient Arabia, was built, according to Kazwini (Caussin de Perceval—Essai sur l'histoire des Arabes) by Surahbîl, one of these ancient monarchs. It was an immense building, with four faces, one red, another white, a third yellow, and the fourth green. In the midst was an edifice of seven stories, each story forty cubits in height. The lowest formed a hall, entirely constructed of marble, and covered with a single slab of marble. At the four corners were figures of lions, hollow, so that when the wind entered their mouths, they made noises like roarings. This great city became afterwards the formidable rival of Mecca, and if the enterprise of its Abyssinian master, Abrahet al Ashram, had succeeded, the worship of the Ka'beh might have been destroyed, the Ḳoraysh subdued or scattered, and the advent of Islam prevented. The invasion of Abraheh took place about the time of the birth of Moḥammed, in what is called "the year of the Elephant." Ṣan'â was temporarily wrested from the power of Moḥammed by the rival prophet, Al Aswad, who was slain only two days before the former's death. Little historical interest attached to Ṣan'â in

later times, but it continued to be the most populous and thriving town in Yemen. The Ghoṃdân and the temple which belonged to it were destroyed by the Khalif 'Othmân. San'â is said to be an Abyssinian term, meaning "pleasant" or "comfortable," and to have been substituted for the former name of the city.

When I mounted.—When I made it my *monture*, my usual conveyance. غارب is the part between the hump and the neck. "When I made wandering my steed" is the idea intended.

Its depths.—حومة, the main part or portion of a thing, as the sea, sand, or a fight; the deepest part thereof (Lane). Hence it is applied to *the thick* of the city, and its innermost parts.

Fray the tissue of my countenance.—This metaphor is often repeated in the Assemblies to describe the shame of beggary. He who begs is said to wear out the tender skin of his face, to harden it and dry up its moisture. Though alms-giving is enjoined on Moslems, and beggars are sufficiently numerous among them, yet mendicity is always spoken of as humiliating and disgraceful. The Prophet said, "If ye knew what was in beggary, not one of you would approach another to ask of him." A poet exclaims:

The water of thy hand (its bounty), whether it be generous or niggardly,
Compensates not for the water of my face, which I spend in exchange for it.

The phrase here used occurs again in the Thirty-seventh Assembly, where, in some verses in praise of patience under misfortune, the author says:

The man of spirit, if his eye have a mote in it, hides the mote of his eyelids even from his eye-ball (conceals his poverty or pain);
And when the tissue of his garment is worn, he wears not out the two tissues of his cheeks.

De Sacy, in the commentary to the Thirty-seventh Assembly, quotes several passages on the shame of beggary.

A wide place of concourse.—Harîri remarks in the Durrah that a meeting place is not called نادٍ unless the company are in it. (De Sacy, Anthologie Grammaticale Arabe, p. 30, Arabic

Text). It is much to be regretted that this work of Ḥarîri on the niceties of the language has not yet been printed. Judging from the portion given by De Sacy, it must be an invaluable companion to the Assemblies.

Cadences.—سجع is applied originally to the cadence of a dove's cooing, and then metaphorically to the parallelistic rhymed prose, the sound of which has a certain resemblance to it. Compare رجز and رمل.

To catch—Literally, to take a light or brand. This metaphor, derived from the custom of getting a light at a neighbour's fire, is often repeated. From frequent use it came to have a special signification, so that iḳtibâs, in the language of scholars, is applied to the introduction into a composition of well-known phrases from another author, proverbial expressions, or words of the Koran, for the sake of ornament.

As he coursed.—For the meaning of خبب, see Lane.

And the throat of his improvisation.—It is impossible to render into English the bold metaphor here used. The شقشقة of the male camel is the faucial bag or inner part of the throat, which, when enraged or excited by any cause, he thrusts out of his mouth with a roaring noise, called غطيط. The noise of the she-camel, as also of the male camel when he does not thrust out this substance, is called هدير. The شقشقة is thus used figuratively to signify the power of rapid and impetuous oratory. Ḥarîri uses the same metaphor in the Twenty-ninth Assembly to describe the flow of Abû Zayd's speech (De Sacy's edition, p. 354). In both cases he, no doubt, had in mind the proverb used by the Khalif ʿAli, when he was asked why he had not made his oration longer, شقشقة هدرت ثمّ قرّت. *The shiḳshiḳah roars and then is silent.* (Arab. Prov. I. 673). The sermon of Abû Zayd is excellently imitated by Naṣîf al Yazaji in his Third Assembly.

Thyself, thy chief enemy.—A saying of the Prophet is, "Thy greatest enemy is not he who, if thou kill him, thou hast thy revenge, or he who, if he kill thee, thou enterest into paradise; but thy greatest enemy is thyself in thy own body". Al Aṣmaʿî, on

receiving from a man food on his journey, said to him, "God confound all thy enemies except thyself."

Woe to him who seeks the world.—These verses are of the بحر مجتث, the sixth metre of the fourth circle, or دائرة المشتبه, which is formed by the primitive feet

مفاعيلن مفاعيلن فاعِ لا تن

This circle contains the سريع, منسرح, خفيف, مضارع, مقتضب, and مجتث, the measure of the last being مستفع لن فاعلاتن فاعلاتن, twice in each verse. It must be observed that the تفعِ in مستفعِ is a وتد مفروق, corresponding to فاعِ in the original measure of the circle, so that this part of the foot is not subject to زحاف. Though there are instances of the مجتث being used تامّ, that is, with its full measure, yet the general use is as here مجزوء, with the عروض and the ضرب regular (صحيح), the measure being

مستفعِ لن فاعلاتن مستفعِ لن فاعلاتن

Of زحاف, there enter into this metre the following—كفّ, خبن, and شكل. Of the first there are instances in all three of the verses; فاعلاتن becoming فَعِلاتن, and مستفعِ لن becoming مفاعلن = متفعِ لن. The تجنيس in the rhyme is to be noticed. Sherîshi gives instances of it from other poets.

Laid his dust, and let his spittle subside.—These metaphors express the cessation from vehement utterance.

Gazed on his up-rising.—تحفّز is the preparation to rise; the being half upright, in an uneasy posture, as one who is about to stand up and depart.

To move away from the midst.—To fly away, or aberrate from the centre. An allusion to the scientific expression.

A bucket from his stream.—The use of metaphors from the drawing of water, from rain or dew, to express the bestowing of bounty, are continually to be met with in Ḥarîri, as in all Arabic poets. The ancient Arabs, whose poets set fashions of literary diction which have never been departed from, were

natives of the Nejd and other regions where the want of water was continually felt, and they spoke to a race whose lives were passed in anxiety lest their corn and herbage should be destroyed, their homes made uninhabitable by a year of drought, and their journeys perilous by the drying up of wells. Hence in poetical language, water and moisture are almost synonymous with benefit; to seek bounty is to go to the spring, to confer it is to fill the bucket or the skin-bag of the suppliant. It is in accordance with this sentiment that "cloud" has in Arabic poetry a favourable signification, while unbroken sunshine represents suffering and protracted misfortune; a use of similitude the very opposite to our own. To say "A cloud gathered over my life" would mean to an Englishman that distress or poverty fell upon it; to an Arab it would mean that success, or a wealthy benefactor had raised the speaker to competence. To forecast the rains by watching the form of the clouds and the lightning, is a phrase used in the same metaphorical manner, and you may say, "I watched the lightning" of such a one, with the meaning "I took notice of him to learn whether he was likely to confer a benefit on me." Fortune, or a deceitful friend, are described as a cloud whose flash deceives; the prosperous are a well-watered meadow, and their life is a moistened one. A peculiarity of the Semitic languages is the clearness with which they show the original material signification of words, under their secondary and metaphorical meanings, and this is nowhere more remarkable than in the constant association of water with comfort, good fortune, bounty, wealth, and similar ideas.

An Attendant.—تلميذ, a word taken by the Arabs from the Jews or Syrians, תַּלְמִיד. Ḥarîri, in the Durrat al Ghawwâs, (Anthol. Arabe, p. 50, Arabic text), says that the first letter must have *kesr*, since words of this form are فِعليل. From this he deduces that the name of the Queen mentioned in the Koran, xxvii. 23, must be Bilḳîs, and not, as often pronounced, Balḳîs. Learned men were often waited on by their pupils.

Thy reality.—مخبر. The real, intrinsic state of a thing. See the Thirty-second Assembly, page 401, De Sacy's edition.

But when.—For the use of أن redundant, after لمّا, see Lane, Book I., page 105.

I don the black robe.—The metre of these lines is the متقارب, the only metre belonging to the fifth circle, or دائرة المُتّفق, which Al Khalîl mentions. This circle, which consists only of five-lettered feet, is formed by the primitive foot فَعُولُنْ, and the complete measure of the متقارب is

فعولن فعولن فعولن فعولن فَعُولُنْ فَعُولُنْ فَعُلُنْ فَعُولُنْ

which is the measure of these verses, being the first ضرب of the first عروض.

The only زحاف which enters into this metre is قبض, by which فعولن becomes فعولُ; but the chief peculiarity of the metre is the intermixture of the عروض محذوفة with the صحيحة, by which the صدر may be ended either by فعولن or by فَعَو = فَعَل.

This licence is so common that, in many compositions, almost every line is thus shortened. It will be seen that this is the case with all the author's lines, except the first and fourth.

The *khamîṣah* is described as a black square garment, having two ornamental borders; if it has not the borders it is not called by this name. It is, however, evidently used here to signify a garment worn by pilgrims or devotees.

My meal.—Khabîṣah is a mess of khabîṣ, or dates and butter, a common article of food among the poor.

The lion of the thicket.—"As one who seeks his prey in the lion's lair" is a proverbial expression for the rushing into danger in pursuit of an object, and is derived from the verse of a poet:

O Ṭayya of the field and the mountains; he who threatens you is as one who seeks the prey in the lion's lair. (Prov. Arab. II. 359).

My loin quiver at it.—More exactly the muscles of the shoulders, the part between the shoulder and the side. Compare Mo'allaḳah of Ṭarafeh, v. 101.

On the field of battle, where man dreads death, where the shoulder muscles quiver, wedged together in the strife.

THE SECOND ASSEMBLY.

Ḥolwân.—A proverbial expression is "Longer in companionship than the two palm-trees of Ḥolwân." Two palm-trees, planted on a hill near the town in the time of the Persians, had been celebrated by the poet Mo'ṭî ibn Iyâs, who addressed to them a lamentation at his separation from a slave-girl whom he had sold, saying that they too would weep if they were parted. For this reason the Khalif Al Manṣûr forbade their destruction. But Hârûn ar-Reshîd, passing that way, was seized with a fever, and the pith of a palm-tree being prescribed to him, he cut down one of them. The other quickly withered away. This legend is worthy of notice, as it has a character of sentimentality somewhat rare in the East. (Prov. Arab. II. 47). Ḥolwân is four stations east of Bagdad, and was named after its founder, Ḥolwân ibn 'Alî ibn Ḳoḍâ'ah. It consists of two towns divided by a large river. It was conquered in the time of the Khalif 'Omar by Sa'd ibn Abî Waḳḳâṣ, after the battle of Jelûleh.

My amulets were doffed and my turbans were donned.—Ever since I came to the age of puberty. Among the Arabs amulets were hung round children's necks to preserve them from the evil eye, or the designs of Jinn; and these were taken off when the child reached a certain age. When the boy approached manhood he assumed the turban and girt on the sword.

The word *temâ'im* signifies "certain beads which the Arabs of the desert used to hang upon their children to repel, as they asserted, the evil eye;" or necklaces, on which amulets were put. Temâ'im were forbidden by the Prophet, though in معاذات, which are sentences from the Koran, there is no harm; so that Ḥarîri, in describing Ḥârith as wearing *temâ'im* in childhood, speaks after the manner of the Arabs of the Ignorance, which is allowable in poetical composition, as the attribution to moderns of classical customs and beliefs is allowed to European poets.

Of the charms used among Moslems of the present day an niteresting account may be found in Mr. Lane's Modern Egyptians. Another kind of charm to which great power has been attributed is that which is called by mathematicians a Magic Square, that is the arrangement of numbers in certain orders, so that, whether counted horizontally, perpendicularly, or diagonally, each row may make up the same sum. Others present more complicated relations of numbers; and each has its virtue in certain positions of the planetary bodies. But these latter were the devices of astrologers rather than of theologians; and it may be presumed that the only amulet used by the strictest professors consisted of verses of the Koran, or relics in some way connected with religion.

Learning's seat.—According to the opinion of some this was the name of a place, so called from being the meeting place of learned men.

Hope and desire.—Literally, "It may be" and "Perhaps." When he could find no one to instruct him sufficiently, he passed his time in hoping that such a person would soon appear.

Shifting among the varieties of pedigree, etc.—The Arab race, being made up of many tribes, the members of which, though continually roaming through the country and taking up their temporary abode in strange cities, or among neighbouring tribes, still prided themselves on their allegiance to their own kinsmen, and relied on the protection which these would give them, it was the habit to ask the name and pedigree of a new comer. Examples of this occur frequently in the Assemblies. When Abû Zayd has charmed his audience with one of his displays, he is commonly asked what is his home, and from what stock he derives his lineage. In answer, he generally claims to be of kin to the race of Ghassân, who reigned in Syria under the protection of the Romans, and whose rivalries with the kings of Hira, who were under the protection of the Persians, make up a great part of ancient Arab history. Thus, in the Sixth Assembly, he says, "Ghassân is my kindred and

Serûj my home." In the present case he is represented as giving various accounts of himself as might be most suitable to the various disguises which he assumed.

Beating about.—There may be here a double signification to خبط. From its primitive signification "to beat" it is used to express the stumbling of the purblind she-camel, which beats the ground with her hoof, not seeing whither she is going, and is thence applied to any one who goes recklessly to work in any matter. Another signification is to beat a tree, so as to break off the leaves for fodder, whence the word is metaphorically applied to the extorting alms from the benevolent by importunity. Either sense would be applicable here. In the Nineteenth Assembly the author purposely exhibits the two senses of the word when he says of Abû Zayd يخبط خبط الصابين و المصيبين.

Sâsân.—Sâsân al Akbar, son of Bahman, son of Isfendiyâr, son of Kushtâsif, a Prince of Western Persia, is the reputed chief and patron of all beggars and mountebanks. The legend is that Bahman, being near his death, sent for his daughter Ḥomaya, who was pregnant, and settled the succession on her and her child, if it should prove a boy, to the exclusion of his own son Sâsân. Sâsân, indignant at this, left the court, and lived the life of a shepherd among the Kurds, so that his name passed into a proverb for one who leads a vagabond life. Hence "the people of Sâsân the Kurd" is a phrase signifying beggars, prestigiators, people that go about with dogs or monkeys and the like. These people had a cant of their own, which was not thought unworthy of study and imitation by the learned. One Abû Dulaf wrote a *ḳaṣîdeh* in their language, which is said to have supplied Ḥarîri with many of the terms used in the Thirtieth Assembly. This Assembly, which I purpose to publish in my second volume, introduces Abû Zayd making a speech at a beggars' wedding, full of the cant phrases current among them. In the Forty-ninth, called the Assembly of Sâsân, one of the masterpieces of the author, Abû Zayd exhorts his son to follow a beggar's life, as the happiest and most independent; and there he speaks of Sâsân as having laid the foundations of the pro-

fession, and distinguished its kinds, and kindled the flame of it in east and west.

Sherîshi gives another account of the origin of this term. He says that after the Persians had been subdued in the time of the Khalifs ʿOmar and ʿOthmân, they submitted peaceably to the conquerors, adopting their manners and religion, and that being a clever, artful people they betook themselves to various ways of making their living, one of which was mendicancy. Their way of exciting commiseration was to give out that they belonged to the royal house of Sâsân, or, as we call them, the Sassanids, and to describe the cruel changes of fortune and their fallen conditon, so that at last people came to call a beggar a Sâsâni. This may be the true derivation of the word, but it is evident, from the Forty-ninth Assembly, that Ḥarîri adopts the legend which makes Sâsân a real person.

The Princes of Ghassân.—The ancestors of this family issued from Yemen at that celebrated epoch of Arab history, the breaking of the dyke of Mareb. The legend is that Amr Muzayḳîyâ, being warned by his wife of the approaching calamity, sold his property and emigrated, being followed by many other families, who found the country reduced to sterility. (See the note at the end of the Seventeenth Assembly, to the words "We went asunder like the bands of Saba"). The part of the community which followed Muzayḳîyâ first halted in the northern part of Yemen, by a lake called Ghassân, and here Muzayḳîyâ died. His son Thaʿlabeh migrated with his followers to Baṭn Marr, in the territory of Mecca. From this place again they were obliged to depart, owing to feuds with the possessors of the land. On these early and vague portions of their history it is unnecessary to dwell. It was only when they left Arabia proper and migrated to the regions of Syria that they became of importance. Here they were known by the name of Ghassân, from the lake where they first inhabited; or, according to other authorities, from a lake of the same name, between Hijâz and Syria. At last they arrived in the plains of Bozra, where the Benû Salîh dwelt under the authority of the

Roman Empire. They were desired to pay tribute, and refusing, sustained a war against the Benû Salîh, which ended in their defeat. They then accepted the condition of tributaries, which they held under successive Princes, until at an epoch, which M. Caussin de Perceval places A.D. 292, they, having greatly increased in numbers and strength, overthrew the House of the Daj'am, the reigning family of the Benû Salîh, and became the ruling race of the country. The Romans, who troubled themselves little concerning these revolutions, accepted a Ghassânide vassal, and Tha'labeh, son of 'Amr, son of Mujâlid, became the first prince of his race. After his death the crown passed to his kinsman Jafneh, and the family of Ghassân maintained a high position for 350 years. It is supposed that they embraced Christianity in the reign of Constantine. Though sometimes, as under their queen Mâwiyeh, rebellious against the Romans, they were generally faithful vassals, and aided them against the Persians and the kings of Hira. Their last ruler was Jebelet al Ayham, a prince of generosity and magnificence. When the Moslems invaded Syria, under the Khalifate of Abû Bekr, Jebeleh supported the cause of the Empire in the field; but when Heraclius gave up the contest, Jebeleh submitted to the Khalif 'Omar and embraced Islam in 637. Thus ended the princeship of Ghassân, but the name of the family remained as the exemplar of grandeur and nobility of race; and kinship with it was, no doubt, often claimed by Syrian Arabs who had little right to the distinction. Of proverbs connected with Ghassân, see Prov. Arab. I. 421, "Take from Jith' what he gives thee," and 422, "Take it, even if thou give for it the earrings of Mâriyeh." Although Ḥarîri makes his hero a son of Ghassân, yet the tribe are said by Ibn Khaldûn not to have spoken pure Arabic, since they bordered on foreigners, and thereby their language became corrupted.

At one time—at another—and now—and anon.—This use of different words, to vary the expression "at times," is much affected by the author. Compare the Twelfth, in the description of Abû Zayd in the tavern.

Goodly attainments.—By آلة is meant that by which one works, an instrument. In the saying of ʿAli, "He makes use of the آلة of religion in seeking the goods of the present world," science or knowledge is meant; because thereby only is religion. The same meaning belongs to the word in the present passage. (Lane.)

Valued highly.—Compare the use of نَافَسَ, in the Twenty-ninth.

With him I wiped away. The metre of these verses is طويل, as already explained.

Some doubt from my heart.—Uncertainty on points of language and grammar.

Until the hand of want, etc.—These extravagant expressions are scarcely to be paralleled even in Ḥarîri. The second clause of the sentence is literally "The want of a bone urged him." The word اغرى is applied to setting on a dog, and is therefore in keeping with the words "want of a bone." When the words of a phrase are all in keeping with the metaphor, the metaphor is termed مُرشّح, otherwise it is مجرّد. See note at page 8, De Sacy's edition. It may be noticed that Ḥarîri says in the *Durrah* that كأس can never be applied to a cup except when it has liquor in it.

After he was gone.—These lines, in the original, are a string of assonances, very ingenious and not unpleasing. The rhymes of راقني and لاقني, and of شاقني and ساقني, present instances of what is called تضمين المزدوج; that is, the insertion into the body of a sentence or verse of two rhymed words, in order to gratify the hearing by the assonance. The term قافية مزدوجة, like مثنوي, is applied to a poem where the two hemistiches of each verse rhyme together, and there is no continuous rhyme throughout the poem. A familiar instance of this is the Alfîyeh of Ibn Mâlik; in Persian literature it has been preferred by the greatest poets. But in Arabic this "coupled" rhyme is more usually thrown in as an ornament in the body or حشو of the verse. An instance of it, probably accidental, is given from

the Koran, xxvii. 22, where the bird says to Solomon, جِئْتُكَ من سبأ بنبأ يقين (I have come to thee from Saba, with certain intelligence); also in the words of the Prophet المومنون هينون ولينون *Ta'rîfât*, p. 62. Examples of it so abound in Ḥarîri, that it is needless to quote them. In these verses there is also an instance of what is called إعنات or لزوم ما لا يلزم, which consists in the author making a more laboured rhyme at the end of his verse than he is obliged to do by the laws of prosody. If the author constrain himself to keep to a certain *ridf* or *dakhîl*, or to one particular letter or vowel before the *ravî*, he produces a more perfect and melodious rhyme. In this case the termination of both lines with أَلِ is an instance of such an elegance. Here the *ravî*, which is ل, is preceded in both verses by a *dakhîl*, namely, ل with *kesr*, and the *ta'sîs* which is ا. Furthermore, each hemistich of each verse closes with ل.

He was hidden from me.—This word is used to signify the disappearance of the moon during the last days of the month, when it is in conjunction with the sun.

Where my branch had sprouted.—His native town of Basra. For a similar expression see the Thirty-third Assembly, "Make known to us the *dowḥah* (some large tree) of thy branch."

To produce what was in his wallet.—To make a display of his stores of learning.

The sagacity of his judgment.—The meaning of فصل الخطاب, as applied to David in the Koran, has been the subject of much controversy. From the context it would seem to mean the faculty of judging and settling disputes, or of perceiving the application to himself of the case which the angels put before him, (Koran, xxxviii. 19). Baydâwi says that the فصل of litigation is the discrimination of right from wrong; and of discourse the use of choice language, which gives the person addressed a true conception of the meaning, and in which the grammatical and rhetorical distinctions are fully observed. It may be observed that from this passage in the Koran is derived the strange idea of some Moslems, that the phrase امّا بعد, and the practice of prefacing a discourse with an initiatory invocation, was due to

David, since فصل الخطاب is attributed to David, though, of course, as Bayḍâwi points out, not in the technical sense which the words afterwards assumed.

Abû ʿObâdeh.—Welîd ibn ʿObayd al Boḥtori, said by one authority to be *the seal*, the last and the chief of the later poets, was born at Kufa at the beginning of the third century of the Hijra, and was of the tribe of Ṭay, as was Abû Temmâm Ḥabîb, the compiler of the Ḥamâseh. Hence they seem to have been called the two Ṭays (Anthologie Gram. Ar. p. 131). His poems are extant, and have still many readers. Abû 'l Faraj Al Isfahâni, cited by Sherîshi, says of him that he was versed in every kind of poetry, except satire; though his essays even in this were successful. Sherîshi gives several anecdotes of him, which it would be tedious to transcribe. He died in the year 283.

As though she smiled.—This verse is of the metre called سريع, which is of the fourth circle, already described. The measure of the سريع is

مستفعلنْ مستفعلنْ مفعولاتُ مستفعلنْ مستفعلنْ مفعولاتُ

It has four اعاريض, the first of which has three اضراب. The first عروض (for the normal form of the verse appears not to be used), is مكشوفة مطويّة: that is the ت of مفعولاتُ is dropped by كشف, which is the dropping of the last letter of a وتد مفروق at the end of a foot, and then the و is dropped by طيّ, which is the dropping of the fourth quiescent letter of a foot: the عروض, after these two changes, becomes مفعلا = فاعلن. The first ضرب to this عروض is مطويّ موقوف, losing the و by طيّ as described and quiescing the ت by وقف, which is the quiescing of the last letter of a وتد مفروق at the end of a verse: after these two changes it becomes فاعلانْ = مفعلاتْ.

The measure of the verse quoted from Al Boḥtori is, accordingly,

مستفعلنْ مستفعلنْ فاعلنْ مستفعلنْ مستفعلنْ فاعلانْ

The *tanwîn* given in De Sacy's edition is superfluous.

Of زحاف there enter into the verse quoted خبن and طيّ, both of which have been explained; the first foot gives an instance of the former, the second foot of the latter.

Comparisons such as those contained in this verse are to be found even in the more ancient poets. Thus Ṭarafeh in his Mo'allaḳah says:

She smiles from a dark red lip as when the white camomile flower shows itself from a moist spot in the sand: v. 8.

Thou hast taken for fat, etc.—These are two proverbial expressions, introduced by Ḥarîri in accordance with his practice of imitating the talk of the desert. For the second of them, see Prov. Arab. II. 429.

My life a ransom.—These verses are in the بحر بسيط, one of the most common and melodious of the ancient metres, and often dedicated to such themes. It is of the first circle like طويل and مديد, consisting of five-lettered and seven-lettered feet. Its normal measure is:

مستفعلن فاعلن مستفعلن فاعلن مستفعلن فاعلن مستفعلن فاعلن

This, however, appears to be rarely used; the most common عروض being مخبونة, with a ضرب like itself; each hemistich closing with فَعِلُنْ. This is the measure in the present case.

Of the زحاف there enter into this metre خبن in فاعلن and مستفعلن; also طيّ and خبل in مستفعلن; خبل being the union of خبن and طيّ. Instances of all these licences may be seen in the two verses.

Some suspicions are a sin. Koran xlix. 12.

My saddle-bag.—Used in the same sense as "wallet" above. The حقيبة is a bag for provisions bound behind the traveller on the camel. For its use in a figurative sense, by an early poet, see the Dîwân of Imr al Ḳays (Edition of McGuckin de Slane, page 49, line 9):

God is he who most gives me success in what I seek, and piety is a man's best saddle-bag.

It may be remarked that when an extravagant metaphor or comparison occurs in Ḥarîri, it may generally be traced to some popular or archaic usage, which the author desires to com-

memorate. The word is again used in the Thirty-third Assembly, (page 426, De Sacy's edition.)

'Unnâb.—A red fruit, of an oval shape, about an inch in length, and with a large stone inside. It is sold in the English market under the name of "Chinese Japonica." Schultens, in his edition of the Six Assemblies, is in error when he writes عِنَاب and translates "grapes." Haririi Consessus Sex. 1731, p. 100. The metre of this verse, and the next four, is بسيط, as already described. The line quoted by Abû Zayd's antagonist is said to be from Abû'l Faraj Moḥammed ibn Aḥmed al Ghassâni, called Al Wâwâ. The meaning is "She dropped tears from her dark eyes, and watered her rosy cheeks, and bit upon her red lip with her pure white teeth."

I asked her when she met me, etc.—Abû Zayd here describes the parting between a lover and his mistress. The meaning of the second line is, "She removed the red veil which hid the lustre of her face, and dropped tears from her eye."

Night lowered on her morn, etc.—He compares the black hair which she let down to night, her face to the morning, her slender waist to a branch, and her teeth and fingers to pearls and crystal. A great number of parallel passages from the poets are given by the Commentator, but it would be useless to refer to them. The single verses quoted from Al Boḥtori and Abû 'l Faraj al Wâwâ are those referred to in the Preface.

His dark night was moonlit.—His hair had become silvered with age.

The stroke of calamities.—The metre is *mujteth*, like that of the verses in the First Assembly.

Trust not the gleam of its lightning.—The heavy showers that give life to the parched plains are usually preceded by lightning; which sometimes, however, fails to fulfil its indications; the cloud passing away without having discharged any rain. Hence he who deceives expectations is said to have lightened deceitfully. These metaphors, as has been observed, are of frequent occurrence in the author. Compare, in the next Assembly, "The rain-cloud pours if it has thundered."

THE THIRD ASSEMBLY.

Ḳaylah.—This Assembly is called "of Ḳaylah" because, in the course of it, Abû Zayd exclaims, "By Him who made me descend from Ḳaylah." Ḳaylah is said to have been the ancestress of Ows and Khazraj, who inhabited Yathrib or Medîneh in the time of the Prophet. She was the daughter of Al Arḳam, the Ghassâni, so that when Abû Zayd claims descent from her, he refers himself to the race of Ghassân. Ows and Khazraj, under the leadership of Jiṯ̲ḥ, who was disappointed at not succeeding to the princedom of Ghassân, left the main settlement soon after the foundation of the sovereignty, and settled in Hijâz, where they became the Anṣâr of the Prophet.

The rubbing of the fire-shafts, etc.—These metaphors signify that, though there never was wanting intelligence to keep up the conversation, or scholarship to give the answer to any question that might be propounded, yet discussion never produced anger and rude contradiction. "The rubbing of the fire-shafts" is an expression often used to signify the eliciting the spark of genius or learning that may be in a man. The two sticks by which the Arabs produced fire were called—the one زند, and the other زندة; the former was made of the wood called عفار, the latter of مرخ, these being found the most fitted to produce a spark. The wood called دِفلى was also used. Compare Prov. Arab. II. 208 and 256. The two are called زندان, but the plural form زناد is used as a singular (Prov. Arab. II. 143).

Best of treasures.—For a full discussion of the form اخائر and the use of خير as a comparative, see Lane's Lexicon.

Health to you this morning.—An ancient form of salutation, said to have been first addressed to kings. It is often used in the early poets. Imr al Ḳays thus addresses the deserted habitation of his mistress (Dîwân, p. 20, l. 1). Compare also Mo'allaḳah of 'Antarah, l. 2.

Morning draught.—The copiousness of the Arabic language is

exemplified in the terms applied to draughts at the various times of the day. Ḥarîri says in the Durrah (Anthol. Gram. Arabe, p. 27, Arabic Text) that the drink of the morning is called صبوح, that of the evening غبوق, that of mid-day قيل, that of the night فحمة, that at day-break جاشرية.

The rival had compassion—The envious pitied.—غابط is he who wishes to be in your condition without depriving you of it; حاسد is he who wishes to pull you down from it. The former, ambitious emulation, is a venial sin. A Tradition cited by Lane (Book I. p. 698) says that Mohammed was asked, "Does غبط, *i.e.* the wishing for a blessing, on condition that it shall not become transferred from its possessor, injure him who entertains it?" He replied, "No; save only as the beating off of the leaves injures the tree called 'iḍâh," that is, it only diminishes without annuling its author's recompense, like the beating off the leaves without cutting the tree down, for the leaves will grow again. On the other hand, حسد is a great sin, being the first committed against God in heaven, for Iblîs envied Adam; and the first committed on earth, for Ḳâbîl (Cain) envied Hâbîl (Abel) and killed him. The Prophet said, "Have compassion on three—the rich who has become poor; the powerful, who has been abased; and the wise, who is mocked by fools."

Anointed our eyes.—We were *koheled.* The كحل or ointment of antimony was applied by women to the lids of their eyes from a very early time; a legend makes Zarḳâ 'l Yemâmeh the first woman who used it. For an account of her and her marvellous powers of eyesight, which, according to the story, were attributed by her to the use of koḥl, see Caussin de Perceval, I. 101, and commentary to Fiftieth Assembly; also Prov. Arab. I. 192, "More keen-sighted than Zarḳâ 'l Yemâmeh." The term is here used to express the dull look which sleeplessness would give to the eyes.

Came to forget our saddles: being reduced to go on foot. Thus Abû Zayd, in the character of an old woman, in the Thirteenth Assembly, says, "That on which I carry is now my back after being my beast."

How noble.—The metre of these verses is رجز, which is often used in improvised compositions, being the most simple and unconstrained form of metrical rhythm. Yet there is none which has so much engaged the attention of prosodists, and given rise to so many discussions. In early times there was no such thing as a regular poem, but verses were uttered by each according to his need, to express his feelings of anger, resentment, joy, or surprise. A great number of these versicles have been handed down, and whether we look upon them as having been spoken by those to whom they are attributed, or composed by early reciters and story-tellers, they undoubtedly represent the oldest form of Arab metrical composition. The chief feature of these was a continuous rhyme; for though the verse was commonly made up of a simple metrical foot of the normal form مستفعلن, this does not seem to have been originally essential to the style. The records of the Ignorance have preserved a number of metrical rhymed verses of a simpler structure than those of the poets who, in the age preceding Moḥammed, brought Arabic poetry to its perfection. The peculiarity which distinguishes this *rejez* from other metres is that in its original form it was apparently not divided into two hemistiches. For this reason Al Khalîl ibn Aḥmed would not allow it to be verse, and the Arabic writers always make a distinction between شاعر and راجز. But although they insist on this difference, they have endeavoured to bring the رجز under the same metrical laws as other kinds of verse, and various ingenious theories have been propounded to account for its peculiar structure. According to the accepted system, رجز is the second metre of the third circle, or دائرة المجتلب, which is formed by the primitive foot مفاعيلن, thrice repeated, and the normal measure of the رجز is مُستَفعِلُنْ, مستفعلن مستفعلن, twice. This measure has been used by the poets, but is probably only a development of the simpler form. The measure of the lines in this Assembly is مشطور, that is, one half of the verse is thrown away, so that though the verses are rhymed there is properly no عروض and no ضرب. For the

diversities of opinion on the subject see Freytag's *Darstellung der Arabischen Verskunst* p. 234. The last foot of the verse is declared by one writer to be an عروض, and by another a ضرب; but the most reasonable explanation is that the original form of the رجز is simply an indivisible verse, consisting of مستفعلن twice or thrice repeated.

Of the زحاف, there enter into this metre خبن, طيّ and خبل, which have been already explained, so that مستفعلن may drop either the س, or the ف, or both together. Hence the extreme simplicity of the verse, and its fitness for improvised and inartificial addresses. The name رجز signifies a weak, trembling metre, and is derived from the effect produced on the hearer by a series of short lines with a number of short syllables and a continuous rhyme. ناقة رجزاء is the she-camel afflicted with a disease which makes her haunches tremble.

Perfected by it.—The meaning of تبّ is *it suffered loss or diminution*, and استتبّ is, *it became complete, and in a right state*, lit. "*it demanded loss or diminution*," because these sometimes follow completeness. Or it may be that ب is a substitute for م, the meaning being استتمّ. Lane.

How many a full moon.—A person in authority, called so from his loftiness and splendour. بدرة is applied to various sums of money; some say ten thousand dirhems, some seven thousand denars. It is here used to signify a large sum of money, such as would bribe a man in power, and make him descend from his high state to fulfil the seeker's desire.

By the truth of the Lord: the *necessary existence by His own essence.*

His fear.—تُقى signifies fear of God, by which one guards one's self from sin, and from punishment in the world to come. Compare Taʿrîfât, p. 68; also Bayḍâwi, on word متّقين, at beginning of the Second Sura.

Its power is supreme.—Abû Zayd's fear of irreverence is grounded on the use of جلّ to signify especially the greatness of the Deity, to whom this word is generally applied. جلال

means the supreme greatness and majesty of God, or his absolute independence. Abû Zayd asks pardon for saying that money is Almighty.

The honourable performs what he promises.—This saying was first uttered by Al Ḥârith ibn ʿAmr al Kindi to Ṣakhr ibn Nahshal. Ḥârith had said to Ṣakhr, "Shall I show thee booty, on the condition that I receive the fifth part of it?" "Yes," answered Ṣakhr. Ḥârith had then directed him to a caravan from Yemen, which Ṣakhr plundered. Ḥârith then uttered these words, which passed into a proverb. The legend goes on to relate that Ṣakhr's tribe desired to evade payment of the fifth, until he seized a hill by which they must pass, and, after a fight, compelled them to fulfil his agreement with Ḥârith. Prov. Arab. II. 747 and I. 52.

The rain-cloud pours if it has thundered.—خال are clouds which make you *think* there is rain in them. Thus the word cannot be applied to a cloud after the rain has come out of it.

He cast it into his mouth.—This superstitious usage seems to be common in many parts of the world.

The adornment of the loved one, the colour of the lover.—The adornment refers to the impression of the coinage; the colour to the yellowness of the gold.

The niggard shrink from the night-farer.—To receive the traveller at night, and to minister to his needs, was one of the most sacred duties of the Arabs. For this purpose the generous used to pitch their tent near the camel-tracks, that the traveller might not miss it, or on heights that he might discern it from afar; they were accustomed also to light fires, that he might find his way to them by night. Thus Abû Zayd, in the Thirteenth Assembly, says, "Their fires were kindled for the travellers, and they fed the guest with fresh meat." Compare also the beginning of the Forty-fourth: "On a dark night I spied a fire lighted on a hill top, the sign of liberality." Compare also Ḥamâseh I. p. 693, where a poet says, "I occupy the road with my tent and its vestibule; I settle on the tops of the hills, and dwell there;" and p. 699, where it is said of one: "His fire was

kindled on the hill when the fires of others were veiled. He was not the richest of men, but he was the widest of arm (the most generous.)"

Many similar passages will be found in the باب الاضياف ولمديح. The traveller often made a noise to set the dogs barking, so as to be guided to an inhabited place; he was then called مُستَنبِح: compare Fifth Assembly. The niggardly man was as much despised as the generous man was admired. His pot was said to be cold, and he was compared with a glowworm, whose fire warms nothing. A certain Mâdir was noted for his meanness: see p. 517, De Sacy's Ḥarîri; also Prov. Arab. I. 190. Kosa' was also proverbial for his stinginess, since he burnt his dog's throat to prevent him from barking, so that travellers might not be brought to his tent. Prov. Arab. I. 202. The early Arab poets are full of the most extravagant praises of the liberality both of themselves and those they celebrate; and this virtue appears to have been carried to the wildest excesses. The history of Ḥâtim Ṭay, as recorded in legends and proverbs, is the most conspicuous instance of this. Ḥarîri, in his verse, attributes the meanness which sometimes marked the reception of a benighted wayfarer to the corrupting influence of the denar.

Save by fleeing from thee.—The meaning is that money can only render service to a man when it quits him.

How abundant is thy shower.—The two forms of admiration ما أفعلَه and افعلْ به occur in this Assembly; the latter at the beginning of the first *rejez*, the former in this passage. For a full explanation of them, see Alfîyeh of Ibn Mâlik, with commentary of Ibn 'Akîl, p. 228, edition of Dieterici, or p. 178 Boulak edition. The theory concerning them which is accepted by these grammarians, is that, in the case of ما احسَنَ زيداً, the ما is the inchoative (مبتدا), and is نكرة تامّة or a perfect indeterminate, that أحسَنَ is the past tense of the verb; the pronoun hidden in it referring to ما, and زيداً being the object of the verb. The proposition is the خبر of ما, and the virtual meaning شيء احسَنَ زيداً. In the second form, افعلْ به, the verb expresses

admiration under the form of the imperative, its agent being the noun *mejrûr* by بِـ, and the بِـ being pleonastic. The proof that أَحسِنْ is a verb is that it takes the نون الوقاية before the ي of the first person. The question whether the ما is تامّة is not of much importance; the dictum of Sîbawayh is in opposition to the opinion of Al Akhfash, who makes it موصولة. In one case the sense would be, "What a thing makes Zayd handsome!" or, "What a making of Zayd handsome there is!" In the other it would be, "That which makes Zayd handsome, *or* the making of Zayd handsome, is a wonderful thing." For the conditions under which admiration can be expressed by these two forms the student must be referred to the Alfîyeh itself.

Agreement binds strongest.—Prov. Arab. I. 669. The author of this saying was a judge of the Arabs, who addressed it to a dishonest suitor.

Tossed him.—Tossed him gently; the meaning of "give" is secondary.

The twice-read chapter.—The first chapter of the Koran is evidently here meant. It begins with the words, "Praise to God, the Lord of the world," and may therefore be fitly used in returning thanks for any blessing. The poet Ibn Rashîḳ, quoted by Sherîshi, says of a beautiful boy whom he had been describing, "Say to him who admires his beauty, 'Repeat over him the Sura of Praise.'" The word مثانى, which occurs in the Koran, xv. 87, has given rise to much controversy. The passage runs, "We have given thee سبعًا من المثانى." The explanation of Bayḍâwi, which is commonly adopted, is that this refers to the seven verses of the first Sura; he gives, however, a dictum which asserts that it signifies seven Suras, of which the first is the Cow and the last the double chapter, the انفال and the توبة. Compare also xxxix. 24. Other significations are also propounded, for which see Lane. Ḥarîri uses the word to signify the first Sura, which is pronounced twice in every act of prayer or *rek'ah.*

Blessing his morning's walk.—I have thus translated to dis-

tinguish حمد from مدح which follows; though the distinction made by the author is somewhat hard to seize. It is said that حمد is praise for that which depends on the will of the person praised; so that praising a pearl for its clearness is not حمد though it is مدح. In the present case حمد would seem to be more applicable to the company. But حمد also has the signification of lowly and reverent praise, and may therefore refer to the providential morning's walk, by which God brought him to a generous friend.

What is thy condition.—For واو المعيّة, see Alfîyeh, line 313.

The tempest.—A strong, hot wind, that strips and burns the trees.

I have feigned to be lame.—The metre of these verses is مُتقارب, as of those at the end of the First Assembly, except that here the ضرب is محذوف. The same liberty of making the محذوفة عروض also obtains.

There is no guilt on the lame.—An allusion to the Koran, xxiv. 60, where it is said that there is no harm in the blind or the lame sitting at mens' tables. The Arabs of the Ignorance had a superstitious prejudice on this subject, which Mohammed sought to remove. Abû Zayd now takes the words from the context, and turns them into an excuse for himself. Or he may allude to xlviii. 17, which excuses the lame man from going to war.

THE FOURTH ASSEMBLY.

Looked upon the features of joy.—Unveiled joy as a bride. The word اجتلى is applied to the unveiling and looking upon a bride by the bridegroom.

Broken the staff.—A phrase of doubtful origin, but meaning to depart from or forego. The Arabs said of one who deserted his tribe, "*He breaks the staff*;" so one *breaks the staff* of the Moslems by deserting the faith. Here the meaning merely is, they avoided or eschewed dissension.

The milk-flows.—Literally, the milk which has collected in the udder between two milkings.

Like the teeth of a comb.—An expression of the Prophet; "Men are as (like each other as) the teeth of a comb." In a bad sense they say *as like as the teeth of an ass.*

A night youthful in prime, etc.—A night in the early part of the month, when there is no moon. The comparison between a dark night and youth, and between a moon-lit night and the silvered hair of age, is not uncommon. Compare the Second Assembly, *And now his dark night was moon-lit;* also the Fifth, *Its hind locks grew gray in the dawn.*

The white camels.—عيس signifies literally, "of mixed white and red."

The night-halt.—تعريس was a halt for rest towards the end of the night.

The groan and the roar.—The one is the groan of the camel when its burden oppresses it; the other is the hoarse voice of the male, when he protrudes his *shikshikah.*

His talk-fellow.—All through the Assemblies we shall have mention of these night-conversations. The Arabs, like the natives of many hot climates, took a siesta in the middle of the day, and devoted the cool of the nights to those long colloquies in which first their genius for poetry, and then their fancy for every kind of rhetorical subtleties were fostered. The word سمر means the shade of the moon, or that half darkness which prevails during moonlight in a place which the moon does not shine upon; but it is also applied generally to the dark of a moonless night. لا افعله السمر والقمر means "I will never do it." By a natural transition, it came to signify the place of conversation, and then the conversation itself. For a curious derived sense of سمر, see Prov. Arab. II. 513. Compare also Ḥarîri's own remarks in his interpretations to the Forty-fourth Assembly.

My companion.—زميل is he who rides with or behind one on the same beast.

Alas.—ويكَ is either a contraction of ويلكَ, or an ejaculation expressing surprise.

Only he who clings should be clung to.—A proverb referred to Al Aghlab al ʿAjali.

The sun rise.—Ḥarîri says in the Durrah that شرقة only applies to the rising of the sun during winter.

Excellently said thy father.—The phrase لِلَّهِ is interpreted as "ascribed be to God," that is "fitting to God, through its excellence is what thy father said."—Compare the common expression لله درّك.

Whoso attaches.—The metre of these verses is سريع, like that of the verse quoted in the Second Assembly; but with this difference, that the ضرب is مطويّ مكشوف, like the عروض; both becoming فاعلن.

These verses appear to have been imitated from Imr al Ḳays. (Dîwân, p. 49). The poet says:—

"I break with him who breaks with me; I unite with him who wishes union with me."

And again—

"I join my cord to thine, and by the feathering of thy arrow I feather mine."

There may be some one.—For the use of ربّ, see Alfîyeh, v. 366.

The sun.—ذكاء is said to be a proper name, and feminine, and for this reason imperfectly declined.

With an earliness beyond the earliness of the crow.—The substance of the note quoted by De Sacy from Sherîshi is as follows: When لا is used in a comparison among the Arabs as in this case, "With an earliness not as the earliness of the crow," the meaning is that the thing compared is inferior to the object of comparison. Thus in the proverbial phrase فتيً لا كمالك (a man, but not as Mâlik) the meaning is that the person spoken of was not equal to Mâlik in bravery and goodness. But Ḥarîri evidently uses the idiom in the opposite sense, and wishes to say that the earliness was superior to the earliness of the crow. Sherîshi says that this use, though not pure Arabic, was common in Irak, and that it prevailed in the West among the people of Morocco, though not in Andalusia. It is also to be met with in

the writings of modern authors, and notably in the Assemblies of Al Hamadâni. This Mâlik, whose name has thus passed into a proverb (Prov. Arab. II. 213), was Mâlik ibn Nowayrah, who was treacherously put to death by Khâlid ibn al Welîd, under the Khalifate of Abû Bekr. For the narrative, see Ḥamâseh, p. 370, in the commentary to some beautiful lines of Mâlik's brother, Mutemmim ibn Nowayrah, to whom the proverb is attributed. For another proverbial expression given by Sherîshi, "A meadow, but not as the plant Sa'dân," see Prov. Arab. II. 617. It must be observed, however, in Ḥarîri's defence, that in both the phrases cited as testimony of Arabic usage, the object of comparison is preceded by لـ, which makes an obvious difference in the sense. The idiom of Ḥarîri resembles that which occurs in the Thirty-second Assembly, "guile, as was not the guile of Pharaoh towards Moses," that is, "greater than the guile of Pharaoh;" so here the literal sense is, "an earliness as is not the earliness of the crow," that is, "unequalled by the earliness of the crow."

Two worn mantles.—The بُرْد was an oblong cloth, striped down the sides, which was thrown round the body. Mr. Lane says, "The modern بُرْدَة in every case in which I have seen it, I have observed to be an oblong piece of thick woollen cloth, generally brown, or of a dark or ashy dust colour, either plain, or having stripes so narrow and near together as to appear, at a little distance, of one colour; used both to envelope the person by day and as a night covering."

To shake for them the fruited branches: to procure for them the bounty of the travellers.

The training-ground.—The place where horses that were to run in a race (حلبة) were exercised.

Spies and scouts.—Those who go before an army to spy out the position of the enemy, and those who go before a caravan or tribe to find a fit place for halting or settlement.

And the wasted bank of the day had nigh crumbled in.—This strange similitude is taken from the eating away of the under part of a bank by a rapid stream, so that the rest is ready to fall

in. The meaning is that Abû Zayd wasted their day little by little, until at last they discovered that it was evening and the day gone. There is probably an allusion to Koran ix. 110. Moṭarrezi, cited by De Sacy, remarks on the incongruity of this metaphor, not only in itself, but in respect to the former *ḳarîneh*.

The greenness of dung-heaps: a proverbial expression for a fair exterior which masks deceit. The دمنة was the pen where camels or sheep had been kept during the sojourning of a tribe on a particular spot. When the tribe migrated the place became covered with a rich grass, very fresh and green to the eye, but rank and coarse, and not relished by the herd. The word is used generally in the same sense as طلل, to signify the traces of the encampment in the form of ashes and other refuse. Zohayr, Mo'allaḳah, l. 1; Lebîd, Mo'allaḳah, l. 3. The Prophet said "Beware of the green of dunghills." It was said to him, "What is that, O Apostle of God?" He said, "A beautiful woman of a bad stock."

When they have eaten separate.—The metre of these verses is كامل, which is a metre of the second circle, or دائرة المؤتلف, so called from all its feet being seven-lettered. This circle is formed by the third primitive foot مُفاعَلَتُنْ, thrice repeated, which is the measure of the وافر, one of the two used metres of this circle. The normal measure of the كامل is

مُتَفاعِلُنْ متفاعلنْ متفاعلن متفاعلنْ متفاعلنْ متفاعلنْ

The عروض in these verses is مجزوّة, and the ضرب is identical with it; so that the measure is the normal measure, minus one foot of each hemistich.

Of the زحاف, there enter into this metre اضمار, which is the quiescing of the moved second letter of a foot. By this licence متفاعلن becomes مستفعلن, and as it may take place in any part of the verse, the كامل may be made identical with the رجز. However, if the original foot occur even once, you may know that the metre is كامل. Another licence is وقص, which is the dropping of the moved second letter of a foot. Thus, متفاعلن

becomes مفاعلن. The third licence is خزل, which is the union of اضمار and طيّ. By this مُتَفاعلن becomes مُفْتَعِلن. Instances of the two former licences may be found in the verses.

In the Koran (Sura xxxiii. 53), it is written, "O, believers, enter not the house of the Prophet, unless ye be permitted to eat there; but, if ye be invited, enter, and when ye have eaten, separate, and go not familiarly into conversation, etc." Moḥammed once entered the house of his freedman and adopted son Zayd, and there, by accident, he saw Zayd's beautiful wife, Zaynab. The Prophet instantly became enamoured, and exclaimed in admiration, "Praise to God, who inclines men's hearts!" Zaynab understood his language, and, possibly desirous of a higher alliance, reported it to her husband. Zayd, out of gratitude or respect to the Prophet, announced his purpose of repudiating his wife, alleging as his reason her haughty manner towards him, Moḥammed then resolved to marry her; but as a marriage with the wife of an adopted son was contrary to Arab usage, a revelation was necessary to give this liberty to the Prophet and his followers. The marriage was celebrated with great splendour. A number of Moslems were invited by the Prophet, and the banqueting lasted far into the night. Moḥammed, who was anxious to retire, became angry at the tedious familiarity of his followers, and soon after the above words were revealed, and established a more respectful usage at the entertainments of the Prophet. Abû Zayd, as in the last Assembly, quotes the Koran as an excuse for his behaviour.

His witticism.—The meaning of خرافه is a pretty and witty story, and the more reasonable etymology makes it to be what is "gathered" of the sweets of flowers or fruit, as by bees, and thus, by a natural transition, the sweets of conversation or story-telling. Compare فكاهة and فاكهه. But the usual tradition is, that Khorâfeh was a man of the tribe of ʿOthrah and an inhabitant of Medina, who, being questioned, after a long absence, by ʿOmar, related that he had been carried away by Jinn, and had married a female of the race. A war had broken out between

the believing and the unbelieving Jinn, and God had given the victory to the believers. Khorâfeh had been taken prisoner with others, but as soon as the believing Jinn heard that he was a Moslem they had given him his liberty, and permitted him to return to mankind. People disbelieved this story, and his name passed into a proverb as a teller of wonderful and impossible tales: so that it was said, "Vainer than the tale of Khorâfeh." Prov. Arab. II. 716. The Prophet, however, is related to have said that the story of Khorâfeh was true: a tradition which countenances the belief in Jinn. Sherîshi, in his commentary, relates at length a tradition of ʿÂyisheh, who testified that having once asked the Prophet to tell her the story of Khorâfeh, he had declared that Khorâfeh was a good man, and had then told her how he had been made captive by Jinn. The adventure contains a narrative of a man, who, by drinking at a certain well, had been changed into a woman, and borne children, and who by drinking again, had been changed back to the male form, and begotten more children; of a second man, who continually followed a bull which he was unable to overtake, and a third, who had enchanted horses. The stories are much after the order of the Arabian Nights, and, if the tradition be authentic, it is charitable to believe that Moḥammed related them more to amuse his young wife than to instruct her in the truth. In the Sixteenth Assembly, Ḥarîri uses the word with the article to signify the idle tales told in a night-talk.

THE FIFTH ASSEMBLY.

Kufa.—Of Kufa in Irak, the rival in eloquence and learning to Basra, I have spoken in the Introduction.

Whose complexion was of a two-fold hue, whose moon was as an amulet of silver.—The meaning of this description is that it was a night of a crescent moon, which sets early and leaves the earth in darkness, so that the night is one of two hues, the moonlight

and the gloom. The amulet to which the moon is here compared was a crescent-shaped piece of silver hung round the neck of children to preserve them from Jinn, the evil eye, and other dangers. It was generally inscribed with verses of the Koran.

Saḥbân.—Saḥbân Wâ'il was the most celebrated preacher and orator of the early days of Islam, and his name has become proverbial, like that of Ḳoss, bishop of Najrân. He was born in the time of Moḥammed, and died in the year 54 (A.D. 673). It is related of him that he could preach for hours, and that he once preached before the Khalif Mu'âwiyeh from early morning to the mid-day prayer. He required to hold a staff in his hand, and on being told that this was not suitable to the presence of the Khalif, he defended himself by the example of Moses, who held a staff when delivering the messages of God. Koran xx. 72, and xxvi. 31. One of the earliest extant specimens of an Arab خُطبة in rhymed prose is by Saḥbân. It contains the usual incentives to morality, founded on the shortness of life, and the certainty of future reward and punishment. Some specimens of his versification have been preserved. The family of Ṭalḥah, at Basra, was noted for its generosity. The most illustrious member of it, called for his munificence Ṭalḥat aṭ Ṭalḥât, was governor of Sejestan, and Saḥbân thus addressed him:

O Ṭalḥah, most noble in worth, most generous with thy hereditary wealth;

Thine it is to give, so give to me; then on me will it be to praise thee in the assemblies.

Ṭalḥah said, "Choose what thou wilt." Saḥban answered, "Thy bay horse, and thy baker lad, and thy castle of Zerenj, and ten thousand dirhems." Ṭalḥah said, "Fie! thou hast asked of me according to thy own measure, and that of thy people Bâhileh, not according to my measure; thou art to be blamed for asking so little; if thou hadst asked all my castles, slaves, and beasts I would have given them." It may be remarked that Bâhileh was the least esteemed of the Arab tribes. It is related of Saḥbân that, on a question of reconciliation between two tribes, he spoke half a day, without repeating a

single word. See Prov. Arab. I. 450. "More eloquent than Saḥbân Wâ'il."

Each was a man to remember from and not to guard against.—It is impossible to avoid some awkwardness in the translation of this sentence, in which the word حفظ is used in two different though cognate senses.

Fascinated us, or gained the mastery over us. A similar use of the word occurs in the Forty-third Assembly.

Rousing the dogs.—Literally, making them to bark. When a traveller lost his way in the darkness, he shouted so as to set barking any dogs that might be near. By these means he was guided to a habitation. Compare Imr al Ḳays, Dîwân, p. 49, last line of the poem. The word is often used by poets as synonymous with a belated traveller.

O people of the mansion.—The metre of these verses is رجز, like that of the verses on the denar, in the Third Assembly, with the exception that here the last foot suffers قطع, which is the dropping of the last letter of a وتد مجموع at the end of a foot, and the quiescing of the letter before it. By this licence مستفعلن becomes مفعولن. It will be observed that there is here an uneven number of verses, so that the distinction between عروض and ضرب cannot exist.

Like the new moon.—He likens himself to the new moon, because he is thin, bent in shape, and pale or yellow in complexion.

Begging boldly.—In the Koran, xxii. 37, the believer is commanded to give of his meat both to the قانع and the مُعتَرّ, explained to mean him who waits and is content with what is given him without begging, or else begs very humbly, and him who begs boldly and openly. Abû Zayd uses both terms in these verses as descriptive of himself.

Knew what was behind his lightning.—One of the many figurative expressions taken from the rain-cloud, to signify a knowledge of a man's real nature and acquirements. We knew

by the verses which he uttered that behind the sudden solicitation of the traveller was hidden a night's amusement for us.

I will not roll my tongue over your food.—This word, which signifies to move the tongue in the mouth over the remains of a mouthful, is used in the Thirty-seventh Assembly in the sense of *to taste, to get the full savour*. Abû Zayd's son complains that his father made him *taste the savour of beggary*. Compare Job, xx. 12.

In a note to the verses on the letter ظ, in the Forty-sixth Assembly, two other forms of لمظ are given, namely لمكْ and لمجْ. This variability of the third radical is very common in Arabic, particularly in words that express very familiar ideas, and are much in the mouth of the people. A certain weakness in one of the radicals, generally the third, is to be remarked both in Arabic and Hebrew, and has encouraged the belief that the original Semitic roots were biliteral and monosyllabic, and that another letter was developed in the course of ages, as a larger variety of ideas required expression. M. Ernest Renan (Histoire des Langues Sémitiques, p. 96) says, "On est amené à se représenter chaque racine sémitique comme essentiellement composée de deux lettres radicales, auxquelles s'est ajoutée plus tard une troisième, qui ne fait que modifier par des nuances le sens principal, parfois même ne sert qu'à compléter le nombre ternaire. Les monosyllabes bilitères obtenus par cette analyse auraient servi, dans l'hypothèse que nous exposons, de souche commune à des groupes entiers de radicaux trilitères offrant tous un même fond de signification. Ce seraient là, en quelque sorte, les éléments premiers et irréductibles des langues sémitiques. En effet, presque tous ces radicaux bilitères sont formés par onomatopée." The two letters גר, for instance, express the idea of scratching or scraping which is found in the verbs גרב, גרד, גרה, גרז, גרל, גרם, גרס, גרע, גרש; to the two letters פר belong a similar series of verbs. Similarly, in Arabic, we have فرث, فرص, فرض, فرم, فرى, فزز, فزق, etc. Compare also M. Renan's remarks in the same work (Book V. chap. 2.) It has

also been observed that the etymologies, or rather plays on words, in the Pentateuch often assume the biliteral root, (Genesis iv. I, v. 29.) The Arab authors have not failed to observe this characteristic of their language. De Sacy, in his *Anthologie*, page 449, gives several passages from Moṭarrezi, in which that acute grammarian, commenting upon Ḥarîri, remarks upon the تركيب, or letter-formation of certain verbs, as expressing certain classes of ideas. Bayḍâwi, in his commentary on the first verses of the second chapter of the Koran, says أَنْفَقَ and أَنْفَدَ are of kin, and if you go through the verbs which begin with these two letters, ن and ف, you will find that they have the signification of "departing" or "going out." He makes a similar observation on the verb فلح, which, whether it be spelt with a ح or a ج, signifies the gaining of something sought or "the opening of the way of success." Then he adds that words which resemble it in the first two letters, such as فلذ, فلق and فلى, express the notion of "breaking" and "opening." The interest which scholars feel in determining the early structure of the Semitic languages, and their relations to those called Aryan, must be my excuse for this somewhat irrelevant note.

And forbids him his repasts.—Compare Prov. Arab. I. 540, "Sometimes one eating hinders several."

The best suppers are those that are clearly seen.—The full proverb is given, Prov. Arab. I. 442. "The best morning meals are the early ones, the best evening meals are those that are clearly seen, or that show their face," that is, that are taken before dark.

Unless, by Allah.—On the usage of اللَّهُمَّ see the commentary to the Forty-third Assembly, p. 563, De Sacy's edition, where also it is explained that the *fetḥah* at the end is in substitution for the vocative particle. Compare the French note to p. 569. But the two may be exceptionally combined in poetry: Alfîyeh, v. 584. See also Bayḍâwi on Koran, iii. 25. The peculiar

force of اللَّهُمَّ as *unless indeed, unless possibly*, suggests a comparison with νὴ Δία in Greek.

Shot with the bow.—According to the author of the Ḳâmûs, cited in the commentary to De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 447, عن has here the meaning of استعانة, and is equivalent to ب.

And, lo! it was Abû Zayd.—These words seem not to form part of the ḳarîneh, but to be a kind of exclamation apart from the regular movement of the cadence.

For if the moon of Sirius has gone down, etc.; *if the full moon of the Lion has waned*, etc.—By Shi'ra the Arabs understand the star which we call Sirius, but they also speak of Shi'rayân, meaning Sirius, which they call الشرعى العبور, and Procyon. The stations of the moon, according to the Arab astronomers, are twenty-eight in number. She passes through the signs of the zodiac in every lunar year twelve times, and remains in each station a day and a night. Their names are as follows:—

شَرَطَانِ the two horns of the Ram.
بُطَيْن the Ram's belly.
ثُرَيَّا the Pleiads.
دَبَرَان Aldebaran.
هَقْعَة three stars in the head of Orion.
هنعة five stars in Orion's shoulder.
ذِرَاع two stars above the Twins.
نَثْرَة nose of the Lion.
طَرْف eye of the Lion.
جَبْهَة forehead of the Lion.
زُبْرَة mane of the Lion.
صَرْفَة heart of the Lion.
عَوَّاء the Dog, five stars in the Virgin.
سِمَاك Spica Virginis.
غَفْر the stars ϕ, ι, κ in the foot of the Virgin.
زُبَانَى the horns of the Scorpion.

إكليل the Crown.
قَلب the heart of the Scorpion.
شَولة the Scorpion's tail.
نعائم stars in Pegasus.
بلدة a place were no constellation appears.
سَعدُ الذابح the Slaughterer's Luck, in Capricorn.
سَعدُ البُلَعَ the Glutton's Luck (see Lane, *sub voce*
سَعدُ السُعود the Luck of Lucks, stars in Aquarius.
سَعدُ الاخبية the Luck of the tents, stars in Aquarius.
الفرغ المقدّم the fore lip or spout of the Urn.
الفرغ المؤخّر the hind lip of the Urn.
بطن الحوت the Fish's belly.

These twenty-eight stations are divided into four parts, seven being allotted to each of the four seasons; thus نثرة is the eighth of the number, and consequently the first station of summer. The laborious Naṣîf al Yazaji has united the names of the stations of the moon in some verses which are to be found in his twenty-second Assembly, page 215.

Might be removed.—This rendering, which is adopted in De Sacy's commentary, is given as more idiomatic and apposite than "he bade take away." Sherîshi allows either.

The hurlings of exile.—Sherîshi gives قواذف as a synonym of this word; or it may mean "destinations" or "distant goals." See Schultens' note, Ḥarir. Consess. Sex. p. 113.

Like the heart of the mother of Moses.—In the Koran, xxviii. 9, it said, "The heart of the mother of Moses was empty," that is, despairing or bewildered at the loss of her child. Another explanation is, "free from care," because she had confidence in God, or believed that Pharaoh would take care of the infant. (Baydâwi). From this passage "the heart of the mother of Moses," passed into a proverb as an image of emptiness.

Fate which is bye-named the Father of wonders, i.e. which has this name as a metonym. The كنية of an Arab is formed from the

name of his first or his favourite son, by the prefixion of Abû. To address a man by this fore-name was commonly indicative of respect and goodwill. When his names were written at length it was placed at the beginning of them; thus, Abû Moḥammed Ḳâsim ibn ʿAlî ibn Moḥammed ibn ʿOthmân al Ḥarîrî al Baṣrî. Ḳâsim was the name given at birth; ʿAlî, Moḥammed, and ʿOthmân were the names of his father, grandfather, and great grandfather; Ḥarîrî was a name given him from the trade of his family; and Baṣrî (the Basrian) from the name of his city.

The *laḳab* or *sobriquet* given in praise, as Badîʿ az Zemân, or in blame as انف الناقة must be placed after the name, but when the *kinyeh* alone is used, the *laḳab* may be placed either before or after it. The subject of names is discussed in the Alfîyeh and its commentary, section عَلَم; and still more fully by Al Ashmûni and his Commentator, Aṣ Ṣabbân: Boulak edition, Vol. i., p. 164.

Hail, people of this dwelling.—Metre *rejez*. The word اهل is *manṣûb*, both as being in a state of annexion, and as not referring to persons actually present to the caller.

Worn with journeys.—سُرًى is here *mejrûr* after نضو. This kind of annexion is called اضافة لفظية or اضافة محضة غير. Alfîyeh, v. 387.

Aching in entrails.—جوى is said to be a *maṣdar* used as an epithet.

Throw away thy staff.—A common expression for settling or coming to rest.

By the sanctity of the Shaykh who ordained hospitality, and founded the House of pilgrimage in the Mother of Cities.—According to Moslems, the Kaʿbeh or Holy House of Mecca was founded by Abraham. A legend declares that he was called "Shaykh" because he was the first man who became gray. On seeing his white hairs he said to the Lord, "What is this?" The Lord answered that it was the sign of dignified gravity. Abraham said, "Lord, increase this in me," and then he became fully gray, being about 150 years of age. He ordained the rites of hospitality, since he was the first who entertained guests

and fed the poor. He also entertained angels: "Our messengers came to Abraham with good tidings. They said, 'Peace;' he answered, 'Peace,' and delayed not to set before them a roast calf." Koran xi. 72. The hospitality of Abraham is highly celebrated: compare the well known poem of Sa'di, beginning

شنیدم که یک هفتهٔ ابن السبیل

which Dr. Franklin paraphrased into the style of the Bible. Abraham is held by the Moslems to be the original founder of their religion, which is the worship of one God, and complete submission to His will. Tradition goes further and makes him the author of the rites of the pilgrimage, and even of the usages of civilized life. Thus it is said of him that he was the first who cut his moustache, and pared his nails, and *rasit pubem*, and cleaned his teeth, and parted his hair, and wore a shirt, and cleansed his nostrils by drawing up water into them, and *in latrinâ se aquâ mundavit*. On this subject see Ṭabari. That he was the founder of the Ka'beh is an article of faith, since it is expressly declared in the Koran (xxii. 27). For the epithet of the "Friend of God," applied to Abraham, see Bayḍâwi on Koran iv. 124. Compare also ii. 118; iii. 60 and 89—91; also the beautiful legend at vi. 74. For the explanation of the name Bekkeh at iii. 90, see Kashshâf of Zamakhshari, Calcutta edition, p. 219, or Bayḍâwi. Traditions concerning Abraham are to be found in Al Bokhâri, vol. ii. p. 338.

Fayd: a place in the Nejd, half way between Mecca and Bagdad. It is mentioned in the Mo'allaḳah of Lebîd; and the passage may be profitably referred to since the commentary contains a curious remark concerning the declinability of nouns.

The Benû 'Abs.—The tribe of 'Abs was one of the most famous during the Ignorance. It descended from Ghaṭafân through Baghîḍ, and was close of kin to Thobyân, with which it waged a long war. This war, which is one of the most celebrated events of the pre-islamitic period, is known as the war of Dâḥis from the name of a horse belonging to Ḳays, son of

Zohayr, chief of the ʿAbs, which was the cause of the dispute. It lasted forty years, that is, the feud or *vendetta* which arose extended over that time; for by the term "war" among the early Arabs must be only understood a state of chronic hostility, in which each tribe endeavoured to injure the other by forays, ambuscades, or single assassinations. The origin of the war of Dâḥis was the treachery of a section of the tribe of Thobyân, who, when Dâḥis was matched against Ghabrâ, a mare belonging to a certain Ḥothayfet ibn Bedr, obtained the victory for the latter by foul means. The whole story may be read in M. Caussin de Perceval's *Essai*, vol. II. and at the Proverb "There has fallen out between them a war of Dâḥis and Ghabrâ." Ar. Prov. II. 275. Compare also Ar. Prov. I. 210. Elegiac verses by Kays on Ḥothayfeh are to be found at Ḥamâseh, p. 210. This war, like the war of Basûs, was celebrated among the Arabs for its calamities; hence the proverb *More unlucky than Dâḥis.* (Prov. Arab. I. 690). Several phrases, said to have been uttered by Kays during the race, have also become proverbial. The ʿAbs were eventually driven from their settlements, to which they only returned after a considerable time; at last they were reconciled with Thobyân. The most celebrated personage of the Benû ʿAbs in older times was the warrior and poet ʿAntarah, son of Sheddâd. He fought in the war of Dâḥis, and was, moreover, author of one of the Moʿallakât. His poem was composed in honour of his cousin ʿAbleh, whose hand he succeeded in gaining, against the will of her father and brother. ʿAntarah was a mulatto, the son of a negress slave, and therefore ignoble, هجين. He was of so dark a complexion that, like Ta'abbaṭa Sherran, another poet of the early age, he was nicknamed غراب, "crow." For these reasons his alliance was long rejected, and he was exposed to treacherous schemes against his life. Yet his valour and genius made him one of the most conspicuous persons in a remarkable age, and he has always been reckoned the chief hero of the sons of ʿAbs. A romance has been founded on his adventures, which is still one of the most popular works in the East. ʿAbs em-

braced Islam early, and when the deputies came to Medina to make profession of faith on the part of their brethren, the Prophet told them that the warrior he most desired to have seen was ʿAntarah. ʿAbs, with the rest of the race of Ghaṭafân, joined in the revolt against Abû Bekr, but were subdued by Khâlid ibn Al Walîd. Their descendants are said still to inhabit their ancient regions.

And be raised when thou fallest.—When a person tripped and fell, it was usual to utter a pious exclamation, equivalent to "God raise thee." The formula was لعا لك, or لعا. Compare Thirty-fourth Assembly, "And if thou trip he will say لعا."

Barrah was a celebrated woman's name among the Arabs, having been borne by one who was sister of Temîm, and an ancestress of Ḳoraysh, two families of the highest repute, the one for its nobility and generosity, the other for its position at Mecca, and its kinship with the Prophet. The poet Al Farazdaḳ says of Ḳoraysh:

They are the sons of Barrah, daughter of Morr; how excellent are they in mother's and father's kin!

For there is no progenitor more pure-blooded than Ḳoraysh, and no maternal uncle more noble than Temîm.

(De Sacy's Commentary to Thirty-seventh Assembly).

A crafty bird.—باقعة is described as a cautious bird, which looks to the right and left while drinking, through fear of the fowler, and does not come to the usual watering-places where men drink, but repairs to stagnant pools. The name is applied to any cunning and crafty person. Prov. Arab. I. 162. For هَنَّمَ جَرًّا, a little further on, see Lane, Book I., p. 399.

Mixed hues.—The author alludes to the mingled joy and care which had preceded the advent of Abû Zayd, and which were now lost in unmingled pleasure, as well as to the mixed moonlight and dark which had been succeeded by a single shade.

The limb of the sun.—غزالة is one of the many figurative synonyms of the sun, and according to Ḥarîri (in the Durrat al Ghawwâṣ), it is only used of the rising sun, while جونة is only used of the setting. Sherîshi gives ten of these synonyms; five

of which have the ء, namely الغزالة, الجارحة, الجونة, مهاة, and آهة, while five have it not, الشمس, السراج, المصباح, ذكاء, and بوح. The word غزالة gives rise to the 63rd question in the Thirty-second Assembly.

O thou who didst fancy.—The metre of these verses is بسيط, which has been explained in the notes to the Second Assembly. The measure here, however, is that of the third عروض, which is مجزوءة مقطوعة; that is, فاعلن is dropped at the end of each hemistich, and مُستفعلن becomes مفعولن. Its ضرب is identical with it; and both may suffer خبن and become فعولن. Sometimes مفعولن and فعولن are interchanged in the same poem; sometimes فعولن alone is used, and then the measure is called منخلع البسيط, on account of its lax and tottering rhythm. This last is the measure in the present case.

Al Aṣma'î.—Abû Sa'îd 'Abd al Melik ibn Ḳorayb al Aṣma'î, the most famous man of letters of his time, and the greatest authority on all points of Arabic learning, was born A.H. 122 (A.D. 740), and died at Basra at the age of eighty-eight years. His life is given by Ibn Khallikân, who says that he was a complete master of the Arabic language and grammar, and the chief of those who transmitted orally historical narratives, singular anecdotes, amusing stories, and rare expressions of the language. He was a native of Basra, but removed to Bagdad in the reign of Hârûn ar Reshîd. It is related that Al Aṣma'î said that he knew sixteen thousand pieces of verse, composed in the metre called *rejez*. These verses being mostly of great antiquity, and requiring a knowledge of the archaic words and forms of the language, could only be retained in the memory of a consummate scholar. It was said of him that none ever explained better than he the idiom of the desert Arabs. When he was old and had returned to Basra, the Khalif Al Ma'mûn often invited him to court; but as he pleaded feebleness, Al Ma'mûn used to draw up questions on doubtful points of literature and send them to him that he might resolve them. His knowledge of pure Arabic was so great, that on one occasion he named every

part of the horse successively, quoting the verses in which the poets of the desert had mentioned each. He composed works on the human frame, the species of animals, and other subjects of natural history; on the *anwâ* or settings of the stars which indicate rain (see Nineteenth Assembly), a work on the *hamzeh*, another on the metre *rejez*, another on *maṣdars*. He related of himself that one day, at the request of Hârûn ar Reshîd, he extemporized a poem on the horse, in which he introduced twenty parts of the horse's body which have names synonymous with the names of birds. The poem is extant, and is a wonderful piece of philological learning, but whether it was improvised by its author may well be doubted. (Ibn Khallikân and Hammer Purgstall).

Al Komayt.—Al Komayt ibn Zayd was the last of three poets of the same name. He belonged to the first century of Islam, having been born in the year 60. He was learned in the poetry, the battle days, and the proverbs of the Arabs, and was a man of accomplishments and generous character. His political poems, in honour of the house of Hâshim, brought on him the anger of the Khalif Hishâm, and nearly cost him his life. He took sanctuary at the grave of Mu'âwiyeh, the lately deceased son of the Khalif, and the children of Mu'âwiyeh interceded for him. He then replaced the offensive verses in his poem by others, and was released. He was afterwards murdered by a body-guard of Yemen soldiers in the year 126. The great length of his compositions became proverbial. At his death he had produced 5289 verses, an inordinate number in the eyes of his countrymen, for the Arab poets were never voluminous. Hence the expression of Abû Zayd, "Such as Al Komayt never wove," or as we should say, "span." A poet says:

> Thy stay, my brother, is so long,
> That it is like a poem of Al Komayt.

Some verses composed by him in honour of Meslemet ibn 'Abd al Melik, brother of Welîd and Sulaymân, are to be found in Hamâseh, p. 774. This prince had fought with success against the Greeks, and twice besieged Constantinople. There were

three poets of the name of Komayt; the first, Al Komayt ibn Tha'labeh, was a Jâhilî; the second, his grandson, Al Komayt ibn Ma'rûf, was a Mukhaḍram; the third, the subject of this notice, was, of course, an Islâmî. The second is said to have had the finest poetical genius.

Coals of the Ghaḍa.—A wood proverbial for making a powerful and lasting fire. Ḥarîri, in the Forty-seventh Assembly, says:

Oft is the ruby burnt in coals of Ghaḍa; then the coals are extinguished and the ruby is a ruby still.

Mr. Palgrave, in his Travels (vol. I., p. 38), says, "We saw the Ghaḍa, a shrub peculiar, I believe, to the Arabian Peninsula, and often alluded to by its poets. It is of the genus Euphorbia, with a woody stem, often five or six feet in height, and innumerable round green twigs, very slender and flexible, forming a large feathery tuft, not ungraceful to the eye, while it affords some kind of shelter to the traveller, and food to his camels."

THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY.

The diversified.—The original meaning of اخيف is a horse which has one of its eyes blue and the other black; the word is then applied to other kinds of diversity or variegation. Thus, اخياف, plural of خيف, signifies brothers who are sons of one mother, but of different fathers. In the Forty-sixth Assembly, Abû Zayd bids one of his pupils repeat ابيات اخياف, which have the same property as those of the present Assembly.

Of the pen.—The reed-pen, used for writing. The word is only used of the reed after it is shaped for writing.

Open a virgin style.—Literally, deflower a virgin composition, *i.e.*, write in a new and untried style, without imitation of former authors.

Saḥbân Wâ'il has been spoken of in the notes to the Fifth Assembly.

Scattered fruit, good and bad, from their store.—A metaphorical phrase, signifying the expression of able or worthless criticisms. In Sherîshi's commentary it is said that عجوة is not to be found among the names of the Arabs for dates; and it is suggested that it is a provincial term peculiar to Basra, which, being distinguished for its abundance of the fruit, had doubtless many local names for it. It may have been a kind used only for the feeding of animals. As for عجوة, it is applied at the present day, I believe, to the cake of pressed dates which is commonly sold in the London market.

When the quivers were empty.—A common metaphor of Ḥarîri for the exhaustion of a speaker's arguments. Compare the Seventeenth Assembly.

Ye have uttered a grievous thing.—A phrase taken from the Koran, xix. 91, where it is applied to the Christians: "They say that the Merciful has begotten a son; behold! ye have uttered a grievous (or abominable) thing; one at which the heavens go near to cleave in sunder, and the earth to gape, and the mountains to be driven in ruin."

Skilful in testing.—جهبذ is the Arabic form of the Persian کهبد, a broker, one who makes bargains for others. Thus the literal meaning would be "ye brokers of money-testing," ye who make a profession of examining and judging the merits of works. See, too, De Sacy, *Chrest.* II., 328.

Ye sages of loosing and binding.—From signifying a priest of the Guebres, or fire-worshippers, the Persian موبذ was applied to any sage or philosopher, and then to a judge or councillor of state.

Cuts the envious.—Sherîshi, however, renders it شقّق المعانى.

President of the Court.—The dîwân here mentioned is the Court of official writing or *inshâ'*. Sherîshi gives a curious anecdote which, as he imagines, accounts for the derivation of *dîwân*. The king of Persia, having ordered a laborious enumeration to be completed by his scribes in three days, was

amazed at their rapidity in calculation and copying, and exclaimed, "I see devils" ديوان; hence the place of their assembling was thenceforth called *dîvân*.

The chough in our land, etc.—For the many meanings given to *baghâth*, see Lane. This proverb was originally used in a sense very different to that which it has here. A hospitable and powerful tribe, receiving and adopting a stranger, boasted that "With us the chough becomes an eagle (or vulture);" that is, "the poorest wanderer by our adoption becomes a powerful personage." Ḥarîri uses the proverb merely to signify that the speaker will not be deceived by the pretensions of an incapable person, so as to look upon him as a man of eminence. In Arab. Prov. I. 6, the verb is in the singular and the بغاث is with *dammah*. The word is used to signify the weakest and poorest of birds; thus the verse of a poet:

The common birds have the most chicks:
But the mother of birds (the eagle) hatches but one; she breeds little.

It is said that بغاث signifies birds that are preyed upon; جوارح birds that prey on others; and هام birds that neither prey upon others nor are preyed upon themselves, as the swallow.

Each man knows best the mark of his arrow.—As allusions to the old games of chance of the pagan Arabs are frequent in Ḥarîri, the remembrance of them being preserved in verses of the poets, and in popular proverbs, it may be as well to give some account of the game called مَيسِر, to which the proverb in the text refers. The Arabs of the Ignorance were so immoderately given to gambling that they would sometimes stake their whole property, and when all was lost, play, like the barbarians of Europe, for their own liberty. For this purpose, as well as for divination, short, pointless arrows were used, called اقداح, and ازلام, the latter name being more peculiarly applied to those employed in divination; though, according to one interpretation, it is applied to gambling by arrows in Koran, v. 4. The stake in the مَيسِر was a slaughtered camel, which was divided into ten or twenty-eight portions, according as one of two

slightly different games was played. The arrows were short sticks of the tree called نبع, and these, when struck against each other, emitted a peculiar sound, so that an arrow of another wood was easily discovered, and it may be presumed the use of it was unfair. *The arrow sounded; it is not one of the right sort,* became a proverbial expression in reference to a false pretender: the words having been used by ʿOmar, on the day of Bedr, in speaking of Welîd ibn ʿOḳbah, who had exclaimed that he was of Ḳoraysh (Arab. Prov. I. 341). The game was played by seven persons, and ten or, some say, eleven arrows were used. According to one authority the ten were named as follows:— 1, الفذ; 2, التوءم; 3, الرقيب; 4, الحِلس; 5, النافس; 6, المسبل; 7, المعلّى; 8, السفيح; 9, المنيح; 10, الوغد. Each arrow had a mark on it by which the players might recognise to whom it belonged; hence the proverb in the text. In order that there might be no cheating, each was placed in a leathern case, and the drawer put on a thick glove, so that it was impossible for him to tell by sight or feeling to whom any arrow belonged. It has been said that not more than seven persons played, consequently three of the arrows, the eighth, ninth, and tenth, belonged to no one, and were only added to give greater interest to the game. The drawer, called مفيض, drew from a bag, and whenever one of the three unowned arrows came out, it was put in again. The principle of the game was that the third arrow won three shares, and the seventh seven shares, while those whose arrows were drawn first, second, fourth, fifth, and sixth in order, gained nothing, but had to pay for the beast. When a player won, it was said ضرب فيها بنصيب, (see Nineteenth Assembly, near the beginning). A different and somewhat unintelligible account is given of the game by Nowayri (Freytag; Einleitung in das Studium der Arabischen Sprache). It seems, however, that a second game was played, in which the animal was divided into twenty-eight portions. In this the first arrow gained one portion, the second two, and so on, the seventh gaining seven portions. This kind of gambling was forbidden by the Koran, so that

whenever Ḥarîri uses phrases connected with it he speaks after the fashion of the Ignorance,—a species of classicism extremely common among the writers of Islam. The *maysir* is forbidden by name, Koran ii. 216, and more strongly v. 4 and 92. The latter passage is as follows: "O believers, the *maysir* and idols (or any stone or altar that was the object of superstitious reverence), and ازلام (arrows for divination), are an abomination of the work of Satan." The Moslems consider this prohibition to extend to all games of chance. The "mark" on the arrow alluded to by Abû Zayd was called قرمة.

With respect to the divination by arrows, Baydâwi in his Commentary to Koran v. 4, taking the passage to refer to divination of the future, says that the Arabs used to place three arrows in a bag: on one was written "My Lord bids me;" on the second "My Lord forbids me;" while the third had no inscription. When they contemplated any enterprise they drew one of them: if the first came out, they persisted in what they purposed; if the second, they abstained from it; if the third, they put it back and drew again, until an affirmative or negative answer was obtained. On a journey a man would carry these arrows with him and consult them on any occasion of doubt. At Mecca the statues of Abraham and Hobal are said to have held in their hand arrows for divination: these Mohammed destroyed. Pocock long since pointed out the identity of this Arab practice with the divination spoken of by Ezekiel, xxi. 21: "For the King of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination: he made his arrows bright, he consulted with images (*teraphim*), he looked into the liver. At his right hand was the divination for Jerusalem, to appoint captains, to open the mouth in the slaughter, to lift up the voice with shouting, to appoint battering rams against the gates, to cast a mount and to build a fort." He says (Specimen Historiæ Arabum, p. 318, edition of 1806): Certè quæ de hôc βελομαντείας genere vidimus, multum conferre videntur ad illustrandum locum istum Ezek. xxi. 21. *Stetit enim Rex Babylonis in bivio, in capite duarum viarum ad divinandum divinationem, tersit sagittas,*

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rogavit imagines (vel, ut Vulgat. *divinationem quærens, commiscens sagittas, interrogavit Idola, etc.*) ad quem quæ affert Hieronymus mirè concinnunt cum iis quæ de isto Arabum antiquorum more traduntur. *Stabit* (inquit) *in ipso compito, et ritu gentis suæ oraculum consulet, ut mittat Sagittas in pharetram et commisceat eas inscriptas, sive signatas nominibus singulorum, ut videat cujus sagitta exeat, et quam prius civitatem debeat expugnare.* Ubi observare liceat vocem קלקל quæ alias *tersit, polivit,* reddi solet, ab Hieronymo notione *commiscendi* explicari. Certè apud Arabes قلقل idem valet ac جرك *commovit,* atque idem hic denotare videtur quod جعجل apud ipsos in descriptione sortilegii sui, scilicet *commovere* vel *agitare,* ut confusè misceri possent sortes.

As the Rebels invested Abû Na'âmeh.—Among the bands of Separatists, or Rebels, who arose after the death of 'Othmân and disturbed the Khalifate during many years, was the sect of the Azârikah, implacable enemies of the House of Omayyeh. In the 68th year of the Hijra (A.D. 687) they made an eruption out of Persia and overran all Irak till they came near Kufa. Al Mohallib, governor of Mowsil, mustered his troops at Basra and met them in battle: they are said to have fought for eight months without intermitting a single day. Abû Na'âmet al Katarî ibn al Fujâ'ah seems to have been at the head of these fierce sectaries. His life is given by Ibn Khallikân, who says that he commenced his revolt when Mus'ab ibn az Zobayr was governing Irak as lieutenant of his brother 'Abdallah. Mus'ab was appointed to this post in the year 66, and Abû Na'âmeh continued for twenty years to wage war, and to be saluted with the title of Khalif. He was a man of wonderful bravery; and unless the lines which bear his name in the Hamâseh have been falsely attributed to him, he had some poetical genius. It is related of him that in one of his battles he rode forth from the ranks on a lean horse, with a cudgel in his hand, and challenged the opposite party to send out a man to fight with him. One of them went forth to encounter him, but fled when Abû Na'âmeh removed the covering from his face and showed who he was. "Whither art thou going?" exclaimed the rebel champion. "No man need be

ashamed of flying from thee," returned his adversary. Ibn Khallikân goes on to say that Abû Na'âmeh continued his successes until Sofyân ibn al Abrad al Kelbi marched against him and defeated him in the year 78; and notices the discrepancy between this date and the assertion that he was saluted as Khalif for twenty years after his revolt.

Verses by Abû Na'âmet al Katarí are to be found in the Hamâseh, Vol. I. p. 44. The warrior addresses his soul and bids it to be courageous in war, to remember the certainty of death, the worthlessness of life, and the common fate which awaits all mortals. Ibn Khallikân says of them, "They would give courage to the greatest coward God ever created; and I know of nothing on the subject to be compared with them: they could only have proceeded from a haughty spirit aspiring after glory." Like many of the early Arab heroes he was also famous for his pulpit oratory. Sherîshi gives a *Khoṭbah* by him on the worthlessness of the world, and cites some verses of his composition. He says that he had the *kinyeh* of Abû Na'âmeh in war from his mare Na'âmeh (ostrich), but that in peace he was called Abû Mohammed.

The name of Khawârij was given to those fanatical followers of 'Ali who, after the battle of Siffîn, repudiated his authority and went into open revolt against both the contending Khalifs. The Azârikah owed their origin to Nâfi' ibn al Azrak, a heretical leader. An account of their tenets is given by Ash Shahrestâni. They held 'Ali to be an unbeliever, and reverenced his murderer, 'Abdallah ibn Muljim. But with impartial hatred they damned 'Othmân, Ṭalhah, Zobayr, 'Âyisheh, 'Abdallah ibn 'Abbâs, and other Moslems. For a full account of Abû Na'âmeh, see Weil, *Geschichte der Chalifen*, Vol. I. p. 395.

The straightening of my crookedness: the deliverance of myself from embarrassment.

Come with a sign, etc.—Koran xxvi. 154.

Wool thy inkflask.—Make it ready by putting into it the wool in which the ink is kept absorbed, to prevent it from drying up.

Ghassân is my noble kindred.—The metre of these verses is

كامل مجزوء مرقّل. The كامل has been described in the notes to the Fourth Assembly. The present measure is considered to be of the third عروض, which is مجزوءة صحيحة, and the first ضرب which is مرقّل, and the metre is as follows:

متفاعلن متفاعلن متفاعلن متفاعلاتن

On these beautiful verses Rückert, who has so well imitated them, remarks: "Dieser Ton, den Abû Seid öfter, und nie ohne zu rühren, anstimmt, ist gleichsam der zurückgedrängte reine Grundton seines Innern, der von Zeit zu Zeit aus den moralischen Dissonanzen hervorbricht, und sie in sich aufzulösen strebt. Ohne diese einzige Wahrheit in seinem aus Lug und Trug gewebten Leben könnte er gar keine poetische Person vorstellen. Diese elegische Klage um ein verlorenes Jugendparadies, und diese Sehnsucht nach einem theueren Vaterland, sind nicht erdichtet. Man fühlt das überall, wo dieser Ton anhebt, aber vollständigen Aufschluss darüber gibt der Dichter, sehr kunstgerecht, erst in der ehvorletzten Makame. Mann kann sagen: Dieses gute Härchen am grauen Sünderkopf ist es, woran der Himmel ihn hält, um ihn zuletzt aus der Irre zur Heimat zurück zu führen."

Filled his mouth with pearls.—Conferred on him rich presents.

Sure to traverse the lands.—Metre متقارب. See notes to First Assembly.

THE SEVENTH ASSEMBLY.

I noted the signs of the coming feast.—Literally "I had observed the flash or lightning of the feast." The metaphor is the one common with Ḥarîri of calling the index or promise of anything its "flash." As has been remarked in a note to an earlier Assembly, the allusion is to the lightning-flash of a cloud, from the aspect of which the Arabs prognosticated rain. The

name Barka'îd enables the author to make an indifferent play on words. The derivation of the word عيد given by Sherîshî is that Adam was expelled from Paradise; but afterwards God relented towards him and restored him on this day; which was thenceforth called عيد, because Adam was restored (أعيد) to favour upon it.

Its rites, bounden or of free will.—According to the commentators the obligatory rite, which no Moslem might neglect, was the giving of alms at the end of the fast; while that which was optional, though praiseworthy, was to attend the public prayer on the day of the feast. The usual meaning of *fard* is an observance commanded in the Koran, or by the most weighty tradition; while *nefl* relates to something recommended as becoming in a believer, and undertaken spontaneously by him. For the literal meaning of the latter word, see Ta'rîfât, p. 265. But the limits of obligation varied according to the interpretation of the Doctors, and one commentator interprets the passage according to the rite of Ash Shâfii'î, to which Ḥarîri belonged.

In new apparel.—This is a Tradition originating with 'Âyisheh, who related that the Prophet had said, "It is incumbent upon all of you besides your suit (of two garments) for common use, to have a suit for Friday and for the Feast." Compare Koran vii. 29.

Brought up its horsemen and its footmen.—Paraphrased by De Sacy, "accompagné de toute sa pompe et de tout son éclat." It may, however, be here taken literally, though used in a metaphorical sense in Koran xvii. 66. See notes to Ḥarîri's Preface.

A pair of cloaks, or *overalls*, worn by beggars, instead of the usual إزار, or waist wrapper, and رداء, or wrapper for the whole body, which made up the حُلّة, or dress.

Like a goblin.—سعلاة is explained to be the female of the race of غول, the male being called عكنكع. The Ghûl is well known from the tales of the Thousand and One Nights. It was a malignant demon, of a nature akin to the Jinn. It would light a fire to attract travellers in the desert, and then assume various and

horrible forms, which either killed the wanderer with fright, or made him powerless against its attacks. But if his courage was proof against these terrors, it would not hurt him, and he sat and warmed himself by its fire. De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 480. Mohammed denied the existence of these beings, or rather of their so murdering mankind. Jinn, however, are expressly mentioned in the Koran, and give their name to the 72nd Sura. When a man was lost in the desert, the belief was that he had been carried off by Ghûls. Compare the proverb, *More wandering than Sinân*: Arab. Prov. II. 17. The قطرب was akin to the Ghûl. From the Arabian Nights it would appear that the 'Afrît was, in the popular estimation, a being of superior nature and more formidable powers.

Each simple one.—Each that appeared as if he could be easily imposed upon, and cheated of his money by the arts of the mendicant couple. A long dissertation on the word زبون is given by De Sacy in the Chrestomathie.

Sure I have become crushed, etc.—The metre of these verses is هزج, the first metre of the third circle or دائرة المجتلب. Its measure is مفاعيلن مفاعيلن مفاعيلن, twice. It is, however, rarely found complete; the usual measure being that of the present verses which is مجزوء. Of the زحاف there enter into this metre قبض and كفّ, making مفاعلن and مفاعيلُ. An instance of the latter occurs in the sixth line.

To kin or lord.—This rendering of آل is authorized by Sherîshi, and seems the most reasonable. It is certainly better than "miserly." De Sacy translates "les grands et les puissans."

The garb of the verses, i.e., the elaborate dress of assonance and rhyme in which they were arrayed.

A fee to an informer is lawful.—To one who is employed to make a discovery, or to find lost articles. These words have reference to the prohibition of Mohammed against paying money to a divineress, كاهنة, to discover anything lost, or any secret, by magical rites. But it was still allowable to give a fee to one who should obtain information by legitimate means.

The Return.—I have thus rendered the word by which Moslems express the exclamation "We belong to God, and to Him we return."

There remains not any pure.—The measure of these verses is the third عروض of the بسيط which is مجزوّة مقطوعة. It is of the variety called مخلّع.

Not any of worth. Much controversy has arisen on the lawfulness of ثمين in this sense; and Ḥarîri himself in the Durrah has been cited as a witness against it. But whether it be chaste Arabic or not, there can be no doubt that Ḥarîri has used it both in the Fourth Assembly and here in the sense of "valuable, of worth." De Sacy, who gives the passage from the Durrah in his Chrestomathie, points out that it does not really condemn the use of the word in the sense here attributed to it.

Perdition on thee, Wretch.—فعال is the feminine form for blaming, and فُعَل the masculine. The former is indeclinable with *kesr*; but only as a vocative. De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 527. Compare also Alfîyeh, verse 595.

Both of the prey and the net, etc.—By these metaphors Abû Zayd means to say "Shall we not only receive no alms from this company, but also lose the written petitions by which we are accustomed to obtain them?" *A handful to the load* is a proverbial expression for *ill upon ill*, or in an opposite sense *luck upon luck*. The word إِبَالَة signifies a bundle of fire-wood or dry herbage; hence a *great bundle* of anything, and in this sense it is used in Koran cv. 3. "Hast thou not seen what thy Lord has done with the Men of the Elephant (the soldiers of Abraheh the Abyssinian); how he made their stratagems to err, and sent upon them birds in *bundles* or *heaps*?" But Baydâwi says that ابابيل is here a plural noun without a singular, meaning *in heaps*. By some Abâbîl has been erroneously supposed to be the name of the birds.

A mite.—A small unstamped piece of metal used as a coin.

The polished, the engraved.—These words are adopted from the Mo'allaḳah of 'Antarah, v. 37. "After the heat of the noon subsides, I drink of old wine gotten by the polished, the en-

graved." The epithets, however, in the opinion of some, apply to the goblet, so that the sense is "I drink of old wine from the polished, the engraved." (Mo'allaḳât, edition of Fr. Aug. Arnold, page 156).

It troubled my heart.—The sentence is here the *fâ'il* to خالج and قلبي is the *mef'ûl.*

I might test the quality.—Literally, *that I might bite the wood,* as an Arab bites a piece of wood to test its soundness for making an arrow or lance. In the Thirty-seventh Assembly it is said, *Henceforth be not hasty in censure, nor plane the wood till thou hast bitten it;* that is, *proceed not in a charge until thou hast made sure that it is well founded. Firâseh* is originally skill in judging of a horse, *faras;* and secondarily, the art of physiognomy, or of discovering the disposition of men from their face and form; and then discernment generally. A similar art was that of قيافة, the skilful in which discerned the tribe and pedigree of a man by his bodily form and features. Compare Forty-ninth Assembly, p. 664, De Sacy's edition; and Ta'rîfât, p. 177. He who divined the future of a man from bodily signs was called, according to Maydâni (Arab. Prov. II. 132), حازى; but this is a name for any diviner. The art of *Ḳiyâfeh* was hereditary in the tribe of Methḥij: note to Ḥamâseh, Vol. II., part 2, p. 245.

Save by treading on the necks of the congregation, a thing forbidden in the law.—It is forbidden to break through the rows of worshippers, and, as it were, to tread on their necks while they are making their prostrations. This prohibition is derived from the Prophet, who said, "Whoso treads on the necks of the people on the day of Congregation (Friday) is making for himself a bridge to hell."

Ibn 'Abbâs.—'Abd Allah, the son of 'Abbâs, the son of 'Abd al Muṭṭalib, the son of Hâshim, of the tribe of Ḳoraysh, was cousin to Mohammed, and the most eminent doctor of the first age of Islam. He was born three years before the Hijra, and consequently was thirteen years old at the death of the Prophet. The year in which he died is variously stated, the extremes

being 68 and 74 of the Hijra according to Sherîshi. Another account makes him to have died in the year 67, in the 81st year of his age. He had been blind from his 30th year, but possessed great knowledge and acuteness, and so accurate a memory that he handed down 660 Traditions of the Prophet. He was a man of great physical beauty, and was so careful of his appearance that he dyed his hair with henna. One said of him, "When I saw Ibn ʿAbbâs I said, 'He is the handsomest of men;' when he spoke I said, 'the most eloquent;' when he discoursed I said, 'the most learned.'" His remarkable sagacity was supposed to be due to a prayer of Moḥammed in his favour when he was a child: "Teach him wisdom, and give him increase of knowledge and science." He was called by the Moslems the "Doctor" and the "Sea" (of learning). It is related of him that he saw the angel Gabriel twice when in company with the Prophet. On one occasion he saw a man with the Prophet whom he did not know, whereupon he asked who it was. The Prophet said, "Hast thou seen him?" "Yes," replied Ibn ʿAbbâs. "That," said Moḥammed, "is Gabriel; surely thou shalt lose thy sight." This calamity accordingly fell upon him while he was still a young man. He was said to have observed in verse—

> God has taken the light from my two eyes,
> But set their light in my tongue and my heart.

Some of his recorded sayings have merit. He was an advocate of change of study. He said, "When I am tired of the orator I take up the poet." On the accession of ʿAli he gave him prudent advice as to his treatment of Muʿâwiyeh, which, unfortunately for the new Khalif, was not taken. (Ockley). He was the most liberal of the early Moslems, for he lectured not only on the Koran and law but on grammar, on the Days of the Arabs, and on poetry, giving a day in turn to each; and to him is especially due the preservation of the early Arab poetry. He was for a time governor of Basra under the Khalif ʿAli.

Iyâs.—Abû Wâthilet Iyâs ibn Muʿâwiyet ibn Ḳorrah, called Al Muzanî, was Kadi of Basra at the beginning of the second

century of the Hijra. He is celebrated in Arabic tradition for his wonderful acuteness, of which a number of stories are related, so that you say of a very clever person, *More intelligent than Iyâs* (Arab. Prov. I. 593). Ibn Khallikân says of him, "He was renowned for ready expression and for penetration, and the acuteness of his mind was proverbial; the persons of merit who spoke their language with elegance considered him as their chief; his conjectures were verified by the events, and in the management of affairs he showed great dexterity. It is he to whom Ḥarîri alludes in his Seventh Assembly. He was appointed Kadi of Basra by ʿOmar ibn ʿAbd al ʿAzîz, and his grandfather Iyâs was one of the Companions of Moḥammed." Of his acuteness Ibn Khallikân relates the following anecdotes: Being at a place in which something happened which caused alarm, and where three women, whom he did not know, were present, he said, "One of them is pregnant, another is nursing, and the third is a virgin." On inquiry it was found that he had judged rightly; and when he was asked how he came to know, he replied, "In time of danger persons lay their hands on what they most prize: now I saw that the pregnant woman, in her fright, placed her hand on her belly, which showed that she was with child; the nurse placed her hand on her bosom, by which I knew that she was suckling; and the gesture of the third proved to me that she was a maid." Hearing a Jew ridicule the Moslems for believing that the inhabitants of Paradise are to eat food and yet not pass it away, he asked him if all that he ate passed off in that manner; and on the Jew replying that God converted a portion of it into nourishment, he said "Why should not God convert into nourishment the whole of the food eaten by the inhabitants of Paradise?" Being one day in a court-yard, he said that there was an animal under one of the bricks; the people having raised it found a snake under it. He was asked how he came to know that it was so. He said that among all the bricks in the pavement there were only two under which any dampness appeared, so that he knew there must have been something underneath that breathed. Other anecdotes of the

same kind follow. Maydâni tells of him that, hearing a dog bark, he said the dog was tied to the brink of a well. When this was found to be the case, he explained that he had first heard the bark and then the echo. Two men came before him, of whom one accused the other of not restoring some money that he had committed to him, while the defendant denied that he had received any at all. The Kadi asked the plaintiff where he had given it to the defendant. He answered that it was under a certain tree. The Kadi told him to go to the tree, so as to refresh his memory by the sight of it. While he was gone, the Kadi asked the defendant whether he thought his adversary had reached the tree. "Not yet," said the man unconsciously, "for it is a long way off." Thus his deceit was exposed. On one occasion he was worsted by a witness. A man was testifying about a garden, and Iyâs, having reason to suspect him, asked how many trees there were in the garden. The man, in return, asked the Kadi how many beams there were in the roof of the court, and the Kadi could not tell.

His conductor.—The conductor, or driver of the camels, is called إمام, though he be behind them, because he guides them.

The third prop of the pot.—The Arabs of the desert place two stones close to the slope of a rock, and on these they rest the pot; the rock itself being the third prop. The "third prop," became a proverbial expression, to signify anything heavy or inconvenient; and is thus applied to the old woman whose company was undesirable. It is the more appropriate as she made up the trio which repaired to the house of Ḥârith. See De Sacy, in *Chrestomathie Arabe.*

Yes, by the Watcher from whom no secret is hidden!—I have adopted this rendering on the authority of Sherîshi; but not without hesitation. It seems, however, to present fewer objections than any other. In the first place رقيب cannot refer to the old woman, but clearly refers to God; for Ḥarîri would not have been guilty of the impiety of jesting with so solemn a phrase as *the Watcher from whom no secret is hidden.* If this be so, we must either accept the trivial idea that the old woman and

God accompanied them, or translate the phrase as an oath. It is common with Ḥarîri to indicate a thing by alluding to some quality of the Deity which is in accordance with it. Thus in the Tenth Assembly: "I adjured him to say whether he was Abû Zayd," "Yes," he answered, "By Him who has permitted the chase!" meaning, "By Him who permitted the chase! you have before you Abû Zayd, the hunter." Compare the Forty-first Assembly, where Abû Zayd, speaking of his clever son, says, "Yes, by Him who brings pearls from the deep!" in allusion to the boy's improvisations. In the present case the mention of God, as one from whom no secret is hidden, indicates that the old woman would be an inconvenient spy on their actions.

The Farḳadân are two bright stars in the Little Bear. The four which form the square of either Bear are called نعش, the Bier; the others are called بنات نعش, the Sons or Followers of the Bier; بنات being here the plural of ابن, since the word refers to irrational objects. The stars called Farḳadân are, I believe, the two nearest the pole-star. The pole-star is called جدى الفرقد. There can be little doubt that the Great Bear is mentioned in the Book of Job under the names עָיִשׁ and עָיִשׁ; ix. 9 and xxxviii. 32. Our translation "Canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?" would be more properly "the Bier with its sons." See *Thesaurus* of Gesenius.

As if his mouth were full.—Literally, as if he had an impediment that prevented him from speaking.

Since time, etc.—Metre ṭawîl.

THE EIGHTH ASSEMBLY.

Ma'arrat an No'mân, or *No'mân's Bane*, is the name of a town in the north of Syria, formerly called Thât al Ḳoṣûr. It received its new name from No'mân ibn Beshîr, one of the Companions (of the Prophet) and governor of Ḥimṣ

(Emesa), after he had lost a son there. In its neighbourhood were the tombs of ʿOmar, son of ʿAbd al ʿAzîz, and of Seth, son of Adam. It is celebrated as the dwelling-place of the poet Abû 'l ʿAla.

The two excellencies.—Various interpretations of this phrase are given, but it is generally taken to mean appetite or relish for food, and sexual desire.

The ben tree.—This tree, which produces the ben nut and oil, is of erect and shapely growth, with long, delicate branches, and is used by the poets as a similitude for the stature of youths and maidens. Imr al Ḳays describes his mistress Hirr, "White, beautiful, tender, like a shoot of the ben tree breaking into leaf." Dîwân, p. 43.

Smooth of cheek.—خدّ is the cheek or part extending from the circuit of the eye to the part where the beard grows; it is used also to signify the side planks of the litter, and the side of a tract of high and rugged ground. (Lane). Hence, it may possibly be applied here to the side or length of the needle. But it is perhaps better to suppose that خدّ is a *maṣdar* with the meaning to mark or furrow, and the sense as regards the needle will then be *smooth and even as to the furrows which it makes.* Or خدّ may be a noun signifying, like أُخدود, the furrow itself. Bayḍâwi, Koran lxxxv. 4.

Patient to labour.—صبور has not the feminine form, because it is *faʿûl* with the meaning *fâʿil*; for *faʿûl* only takes the *hâ* when it has the meaning of *mefʿûl*, like ركوبة applied to a she-camel, or حلوبة to a ewe. "Abû Moḥammed accuses the higher classes in Irak of speaking incorrectly when they say امرأة شكورة or لجوجة, for the epithets of intensity are changed from their natural form to indicate the peculiar sense in which they are used; and صبور applied to a female has a masculine form, as علّامة and نسّابة applied to a man have a female form." Sherîshi. This is, I conceive, a better explanation than that of De Sacy, who says, "Il semble que dans ce cas le ة ajouté à la fin de ces adjectifs verbaux soit destiné à les transformer en des noms d'individualité; en

sorte que علّامة signifieroit proprement *un savant unique en son genre.*"

July.—تموز, حَصَّاد. The use of the Syrian months appears to have been common among the Moslems of Irak, no doubt because they were more in accordance with the seasons. Mohammed having abolished the نسيء or ancient Arab intercalation shortly before his death, the Moslem year is hopelessly unfitted for practical life. For an account of this intercalation see *Mémoire sur l'Histoire des Arabes avant Mahomet, par M. Sylvestre de Sacy,* extracted from the *Mémoires de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres,* vols. 47 and 48.

Understanding and discretion.—عقل as applied to the girl is a noun with the meaning *understanding*; applied to the needle it is a *maṣdar* meaning to hold fast. عنان "rein" applies to the discretion with which she could "rein" her caprices, and to the long "rein" or string which the needle draws through the cloth.

A hand with fingers.—The meaning of كفّ, as applied to the needle, is to *hem* the border of anything after it has been basted, مل or شل. Sherîshi says كفّ and تضريب are two well-known processes in tailoring; the latter appears to mean the quilting of a garment by sewing between it and the lining a layer of cotton.

Pique as with tongue of snake.—As applied to the girl this probably means that she was witty or satirical; as applied to the needle it simply relates to the pricking of the sewer's fingers by its point.

She was displayed in blackness and whiteness.—This refers to the contrast of her black hair and eyebrows with the white of her skin. In the Second Assembly it is said of a maiden, "Night lowered on the morn," meaning that her black hair drooped over her shoulders. Or it may refer to the contrast between the black and white of the eye, which when very marked was esteemed a great beauty by the Arabs. Such a contrast is expressed by the word حَوَر, which means "intense whiteness of the white of the eye, and intense blackness of the black thereof, with intense whiteness or fairness of the rest of the person."

Lane. حوراء *houri* is a maiden possessing this quality. In the Tenth Assembly it is said, "Swear by Him who has adorned eyes with حَوَر," *i.e.* contrasted blackness and whiteness.

She drank (or was watered) but not from cisterns.—It is difficult to discover any meaning in these words as applied to the slave girl. As applied to the needle, the words mean either that it is bedewed with the perspiration of the sewer's brow or hand, or that when the cutler fashioned it he threw it red-hot into water to temper it.

Now truth-telling, now beguiling; now hiding, now peeping forth.—By the description that follows the author desires to express the archness and coquetry of the girl, as well as her habitual goodness and obedience to her master. As referring to the needle نصح is a synonym of خاط, he *sewed;* خدع means "to double or fold one part of a garment or piece of cloth on another." The other plays on words will be sufficiently intelligible from the double translation given in the text.

Forced on her too hard a work—returned her to me broken in health.—اولج فيها متاعه اى ذكره والغز بانّه ادخل في الابرة خيطه افضاها خرق عين الابرة و في المراة خلط مسلكيها. See Lane sub voce أتم.

A compensation.—For the special names applicable to various forms of payment, see the commentary on the Seventh Assembly, p. 79 of De Sacy's Ḥarîri.

More truthful than the Ḳaṭa.—The Ḳaṭa is a bird about the size of a pigeon, which flies in flocks, and utters but one sound, *Ḳaṭa, Ḳaṭa,* whence its name. The proverb, *More truthful than the Ḳaṭa,* is derived, according to Maydâni (Arab. Prov. I. 741), from its constant repetition of one and the same cry, which tells its name. He cites a verse of the poet Nâbighah to the effect that if one asks the Ḳaṭa its name, it replies Ḳaṭa! and is therefore a truthful bird. Another explanation is that the Ḳaṭa is never found save where there is good pasturage and water, so that the sight of the bird is an unerring indication to the travel-

ler in the desert that he is near what he seeks. The former opinion is supported by several verses from the poets. Komayt says, "Speak not falsely, for the Ḳaṭa speaks truly; though each man, in pedigree, arrogates what does not belong to him." For the latter opinion the authority of Al Asmaʿî is given. The sureness of the Ḳaṭa in finding its way back to its nest after long flights is alluded to in the beginning of the Twenty-third Assembly: "I crossed rocky places, to which the Ḳaṭa would not find its way." The poet Ash Shanfara, in the celebrated ḳaṣîdeh, called Lâmîyet al ʿArab, boasting of his speed of foot, says, "The ash-coloured Ḳaṭa, though it fly to the water all the night, while its (wing-beaten) sides resound, does but get my leavings." In the notes to this passage, given in De Sacy's *Chrestomathie*, a long account of the Ḳaṭa may be found. See also "Chalef elahmar's Qasside," by W. Ahlwardt, Greifswald, 1859, p. 183, where the subject would seem to be exhausted.

Of equal birth as regards either kin.—That is, whose father and mother were both of pure Arab blood, and whose birth was consequently most honourable. One who was the son of a free-born Arab and a slave mother was called هجين. As applied to the pencil, the meaning is that the pencil could be used at either end to place the koḥl on the eye.

Tracing his lineage to Al Ḳayn.—Ḳayn was a branch of the Benû Asad. The Commentator tells us that Belḳayn is a contraction of Benû 'l Ḳayn, like Belḥârith and Belhojaym. As applied to the pencil Ḳayn signifies a blacksmith or cutler. The word قين, "a smith," Syriac ܩܝܢܝܐ, is related to the Hebrew קון or קין, "to beat," hence to hammer iron. The word قينة, in Arabic, signifies a singing or playing female slave; the derivation of which, according to Abû 'l Faraj, is that "the daughters of Cain first made musical instruments and sang to them; whence, in the Syriac tongue, a song is called قينة, with *kesreh*, while the Arabs called the singing girl قينة, with *fetḥah* (Gesenius). The plays on words which follow are sufficiently explained by the two translations in the text.

Rarely visited his wives save two by two.—The same idea is expressed in one of the riddles of the Forty-second Assembly:

What is it that marries two sisters openly or secretly, and there is no fault to find with him for it?

When he visits one wife, he visits also the other, and if other husbands show their preferences he shows none.

He increases his attention and affection as they grow gray, and this is indeed rare among husbands.

The answer to this is a *kohl* pencil, which is always used to apply the pigment to both eyes at once, and which is the more used as the eyes grow older and require a higher adornment. The custom of painting the lids of the eye, as it exists in Egypt at the present day, is described as follows by Mr. Lane, in the first Chapter of his *Modern Egyptians*:—"Eyes more beautiful can hardly be conceived; their charming effect is much heightened by the concealment of the other features, and is rendered still more striking by a practice universal among the females of the higher and middle classes, and very common among those of the lower orders, which is that of blackening the edge of the eyelids, both above and below the eye with a black powder called 'kohl.' This is a collyrium commonly composed of the smoke-black which is produced by burning a kind of 'libân,' an aromatic resin. Kohl is also prepared of the smoke-black produced by burning the shells of almonds. These two kinds, though believed to be beneficial to the eyes, are used merely for ornament; but there are several kinds used for their real or supposed medical qualities; particularly the powder of several kinds of lead ore, to which are often added sarcocolla, long pepper, sugar-candy, fine dust of a Venetian sequin, and sometimes powdered pearls. Antimony, it is said, was formerly used for painting the edge of the eyelids. The kohl is applied with a small probe of wood, ivory, or silver, tapering towards the end, but blunt. This is moistened, sometimes with rose-water, then dipped in the powder, and drawn along the edges of the eyelids; it is called 'mirwed,' and the glass vessel in which the kohl is kept, 'mukhulah.'"

He lent me a needle.—Es verdient bemerkt zu werden, dasz

Ḥarîri hier, und in ähnlichen Fällen, gerade da mit den Versen anhebt, wo die Poesie des Gegenstandes zu Ende geht, gleichsam um durch die neue und höhere Form der Darstellung einen neuen und höhern Schwung zu geben. Ohne diesen Kunstgriff würde die Folgende Auflösung des Räthselstreites höchst langweilig geworden seyn, statt dasz sie uns jetzt durch das komische Pathos, womit die Bettlerlumpen aufgestutzt werden, gar anmuthig vorkommt. (Rückert.)

The metre of these verses is مُنسَرِح, a metre belonging to the fourth circle, or دائرة المشتبه, which has been already described. The measure in the circle is مُستفعلُن مفعولاتُ مستفعلنْ twice. This, however, is rare, the more usual measure being that of the verses in the present case. The عروض is صحيحة, and the ضرب is مطوّى, (طيّ being the elision of the quiescent fourth letter of a foot): thus مستفعلن becomes مستعلن, which is equivalent to مفتَعِلن. Of the زحاف, there enter into this metre خبن, and طيّ, and خبل, which is the union of the former two, though it is said that خبل is not permitted in this عروض. By the second of these licences the عروض is often made identical with the ضرب.

I swear by the holy place.—Metre منسرح again. المشعر الحرام is the place called Muzdalifeh, which is divided from Mina by the Wadi Moḥassir (see Bayḍâwi on Koran ii. 194). It is described as a broad plain between mountains, and as surrounded by ancient cisterns. It is also called جمع (without the article like عرفات), because the people assemble there, or because Adam there met with Eve, after their fall from Paradise. Here the pilgrims remain one night, that between Friday and Saturday; and here most of them collect the stones for casting, though it is lawful to collect them in the neighbourhood of the mosque of the Khayf, at Mina. After hurrying through the Wadi Moḥassir, they arrive at Mina, where they cast the stones, جمرات, for the first time, and offer the sacrifice.

After his stone had dripped—After his rock had oozed.—The meaning of these two phrases is nearly the same; they refer to

the unwilling bestowal of a petty dole. *To be moist, to drip, to bedew*, and the like, are metaphors which occur continually in the sense of liberality.

My perception—My guess.—حسّ is the faculty of sense, by which anything is perceived, as a sound or a motion: حدس is the forming of a surmise or opinion without distinct proof; a rapidity of passing from premises to conclusions, being the opposite to reflection. *Ta'rîfât.*

The knowing one.—نحرير. For verbs which unite the two significations of slaughtering and of doing or knowing a thing effectively, energetically, and well, see نحر, قتل, بخع, نخع. Compare Ḥarîri's preface, "We are thorough in humility."

His following.—The word جمرة presents a double meaning.; one is a live coal, or a smokeless burning fire; of which the intelligent attendant, suddenly making a suggestion, may be spoken of as the *spark*. The other meaning is a large, independent tribe, not joined in alliance to any other. The authorities given by Lane thus define it: "Any body of men that have united together, and become one band, and that do not form a confederacy with any others; or a body of men that congregate by themselves because of their strength and their great valour." The term جمرات العرب was especially applied to three tribes, two of which became extinct by confederating with other tribes, while the third alone remained a جمرة. In the present passage it would mean the Kadi's large following or company.

Tell me truly your camel's age.—Arab. Prov. I. 710. The origin of this proverb is thus related: A man who was about to sell a camel assured the purchaser that it was بازل, that is, that it had cut its ناب or tush, and had consequently entered its ninth year, and attained its full strength. At this moment the camel started away, and the seller inadvertently called out to it هدع, هدع, the cry by which young foals are called back. The purchaser thus found that he was being deceived, and exclaimed, "Thou hast now told me truly thy camel's age," which words passed into a proverb. For other explanations see Arab. Prov. as above.

I am the Serûji.—The metre of these lines is *rejez*, as in Third Assembly.

Oh rare! لله دَرُّك. This very idiomatic expression of approval signifies, literally, *To God be ascribed thy milk-flow*, and was originally used by the Arabs when they passed one who was milking his camel. It meant with them either a pious wish that the owner of the beast might have an abundant yield, or a complimentary remark that she did actually yield abundantly. Afterwards it became a general expression of admiration, answering to our "Well done!" and was commonly used to applaud literary compositions.

THE NINTH ASSEMBLY.

Between Farghânah and Ghânah.—Between the two extremities of the Moslem world. Farghânah is the name of a region and city of Mawarannahr or Transoxiana, and is now contained in the Khanate of Kokan. It lies close to the borders of the Chinese Empire, between Kokan and Kashgar. It was in former times a place of much importance, having a هيكل or temple of the Sun, built by the Persians, which the Khalif Mo'taṣim destroyed. It is described as being distant fifty-three parasangs from Samarcand, on which it was dependent. The building of it is ascribed to the Persian monarch Nushirvan, who transported to it people from other cities. Farghânah was conquered by the celebrated general Kotaybet ibn Muslim in the year 95 (A.D. 713), towards the end of the reign of Welîd ibn 'Abd al Melik, and here too he was slain after he had thrown off his allegiance to Sulaymân. *Ghânah*, according to the Arab geographers, is a city of Sûdân and the utmost point to which merchants travel. According to Sherîshi the starting point is at Sejelmâseh, on the south of Mount Atlas, and to reach it requires three months' travel, although to return from Ghânah to Sejelmâseh requires only a month and a half, or less; the reason of this being that

the merchants trade to Ghânah with goods and heavy bales and return with gold; and he who journeys thither with thirty camels comes back with only three or even two, one to ride on, the other to carry water. The city has both Moslem and Pagan negro inhabitants, and its merchants are a prosperous body. Sherîshi praises the beauty and good disposition of the women in high terms, and quotes many poetical encomiums on negresses. One enthusiast, Ibn Muslimeh, exclaims, "If a mole be set in an ugly cheek it endows it with beauty and grace; how then should the heart-stricken be blamed for looking upon his mistress as a mole all over?"

The well-bred, the sagacious. — الاديب الاريب: This is a compound epithet, denoting an intelligent and educated gentleman, something like the Greek *καλοκἀγαθός*.

An ill-looking old man.—The word عفرية 'Ifrît, so well known to the readers of the Arabian Nights, appears originally to have been associated with the ideas of strength, cunning, and malignity; the etymology of the word, as given by the Commentators, is very far-fetched. See note in De Sacy's *Chrestomathie*. Its use in the sense of a powerful and gigantic *genie* is derived from Koran xxvii. 39: "Said an 'Ifrît of the Jinn." It is there explained as wicked, rebellious. Baydâwi.

A young matron.—De Sacy, in his *Chrestomathie*, says, "On explique le mot مُصبية de deux manières, selon Ocbari; il peut signifier *une femme qui a de petits enfans*, ou *une femme dont la beauté ravit tous les cœurs*." The former translation has been adopted as supported by more numerous authorities, though the latter would give the better antithesis to the description of the husband.

Among his people: that is, among the people of my father, his male kindred. In the Durrah, Ḥarîri says that رهط differs from نفر in that the former is applied only to the descendants of the same father. Anthologie. Gram. Arabe., p. 42, Texte Arabe. Baydâwi (Koran xxvii. 49) says that رهط is applied to a number of men from three or seven to ten, while نفر is from

three to nine. It seems in any case to be applied only to male persons.

His habitation.—The كسر was originally the lower part of the tent, an attached curtain which came down to the ground. It was then applied to the side wall of a house, and generally to an abode.

Goodly show, etc.—زيّ is the enhancing of beauty or grace by elegant dress. According to Sherîshi زيّ is originally with *hamzeh;* that is, it is derived from رأى, the *teshîl* and *idghâm* taking place that it may correspond with زيّ, the meaning being *good condition,* such as is produced by comfort and affluence. According to ʿOkbari, cited by De Sacy, it means *a goodly aspect as if bedewed with water,* which expresses nearly the same idea.

Greedy feeding.—خضم signifies to eat with the back teeth, as when the mouth is filled; قضم to eat with the front teeth, as is done when the food is scanty. The proverb, "Back-tooth eating is reached by front-tooth eating," (Arab. Prov. II. 245) inculcates patience and contentment with moderate success at the beginning of an enterprise; and in a verse of a poet is made equivalent with, "Be content with old clothes till you can get new ones." Ibn Abî Ṭarafeh said, "An ʿArab of the desert who came to visit one of his cousins at Mecca said to him, 'This is a country where men eat with front teeth and not with back teeth,'" the meaning of which probably is that at Mecca moderation of conduct must be more regarded than in the desert.

Altogether destroyed.—بأسره, like برمّته, signifies literally "rope and all;" and is an idiomatic phrase, derived from the giving or selling of a beast. It means *entirely* or *altogether.*

There is no concealment after distress, no perfume after the wedding.—*i.e.,* it is now time for business, and to make an end of indolence and festivity. Ḥarîri, accidentally or intentionally, somewhat perverts the proverb لا مخباء لعطر بعد عروس (Arab. Prov. II, 482.) The story, which may be read there of a woman having married a man of the name of Nowfal, after the death

of her husband 'Arûs, and which De Sacy has given more at length in his Chrestomathy, and in the commentary to his edition of Ḥarîri, seems but a fabrication to explain a popular saying. At any rate, Ḥarîri clearly uses عروس in the sense of *wedding*, and, perhaps, introduces the words of the proverb without regard to its original signification.

Through the violence that was abroad in the earth.—This is an allusion to Koran ii. 28, "Wilt thou set in it (the earth) one who will work violence in it?" It will be remembered that Abû Zayd represents his native town to have been ravaged by the Christians of the first Crusade, and the political disorders of the time might explain the little attention that was paid to learning and learned men.

Neither of us.—In connection with the disquisition on لا, given in De Sacy's commentary, the student is referred to a passage in the Durrah (p. 51, Anthol. Gram. Arabe). The essence of Ḥarîri's statement is that لا is a singular noun, expressing the idea of duality, like our word "each." You say of two men "each was blind."

He looked down as looks the serpent.—This phrase is taken from a verse of Mutelemmis, "He looked down as looks down the snake, and if he had seen the chance to bite he would have bitten." Arab. Prov. II. 30. اطرق has the meaning to *look down in silence*, as if considering to do or say something. The expression occurs again in the Fortieth Assembly.

Hear my story, for it is a wonder.—The metre of these verses is *munsariḥ*, which has been described in the notes to the last Assembly.

Honour deems base.—حَسَب is thus defined: "Grounds of pretension to respect or honour consisting in any qualities (either of one's self or of one's ancestors) which are enumerated or recounted as causes of glorifying;" and hence it signifies *nobility, rank, or quality, honourableness or estimableness, from whatever source derived.* It is said that حسب and كرم may apply to those who have not celebrated ancestors, but شرف and مجد only to those who have.

I burdened my neck.—Compare the Twenty-sixth Assembly, "I haltered myself with debt."

I swear by Him to whose Ka'beh the companies journey.—Rückert notices the propensity of Abû Zayd to swear on all occasions by objects connected with Mecca and the pilgrimage, and seems to regret this irreverent habit of the Arabs. Ḥarîri, however, makes his characters go much further in speaking familiarly of sacred things. Had it not been for the relaxation of religious discipline, such verses as those at the beginning of the Forty-fifth Assembly, which I shall have the task of translating and explaining in my next volume, could never have been produced. It is wonderful, indeed, that they should have been permitted in any age of Islam.

Chaste ladies.—Of Mary it is said in the Koran (xxi. 91 and lxvi. 12) احصنت فرجها. Hence some read in Koran iv. 29 and v. 7, محصنات, with *kesreh*. In iv. 28, the word is read with *fetḥah*, and has the signification of "married." In other places it means of *free and lady-like condition*, or *continent and chaste of life*. Technically إحصان has the meaning of being kept legally and honourably in the marriage state. The word corresponds nearly with our "lady."

I imagine.—The anomalous form إخال is always used by Ḥarîri as more chaste. It is said to have been originally peculiar to the tribe of Ṭay, but to have become of such general use that the regular form was retained only by the Benû Asad.

Thy chamber.—خدر is the curtain by which the sleeping place of a woman is concealed in a tent or room, and is applied generally to a woman's chamber; a chamber has not this name if a woman be not in it, says Ḥarîri in the Durrah. The word is very old; see Genesis xliii. 30; and, in the strict Arabic sense, Judges xv. 1; xvi. 9, 12; Song of Solomon i. 4; iii. 4.

The master of thy virginity.—Literally the *father*. This phrase occurs in the Preface, "My mind is the father or lord of its virginity." With respect to a married woman, it is applied to her first husband.

The will of thy Lord.—Lord here means God and not her

husband. The word رَبّ by itself, and not in connexion with another noun, is applied only to the Deity. You may say, "the lord of the house," or "the lords of eloquence," (compare Sixth Assembly) in the sense of "possessor;" but "the Lord," or "thy Lord" signifies God.

It may be that God will bring victory.—Koran v. 57.

Abû Maryam.—"Father of Mary," according to Moṭarrezi, is an expression peculiar to certain modern authors, who designate under that name the officers or ushers of a Kadi's court. The metre of the two lines is رمل, which is formed from the third circle, or دائرة المجتلب, like the *hezej* and *rejez*. Its normal measure is فاعلاتن فاعلاتن فاعلاتن فاعلاتن twice. The present verses belong to the second عروض, which is مجزوّة صحيحة; its second ضرب is مُعرّى, and the measure is

فاعلاتن فاعلاتن فاعلاتن فاعلاتن

Of the زحاف there enter into this metre خبن and كفّ, and شكل, which is the union of the two. They have been already explained.

Followed excess by prayer for pardon.—The excess is the sinful immoderation of laughter.

The latter state is better for him, etc.—Koran xciii. 4.

The repentance of Al Farazdak, when he put away Navâr, or of Al Kosa'î, when the daylight appeared.—These are two proverbial instances of repentance; though only the latter is derived from the Arabs of the desert. Farazdak, one of the chief poets of the post-Islamic period, was born about the year 46 of the Hijra, and died about the year 110, under the Khalifate of Hishâm. He belonged to the tribe of Temîm, to which belonged also the great poets Jerîr and Al Akhṭal; so that it was said that before Islam poetry had set its habitation among the tribe of Ḳays, but that in Islam it had migrated to the sons of Temîm. His grandfather, Ṣa'ṣa'ah was known by the honourable name of مُحيِي الموؤدات, *the Reviver of the maidens buried alive*; because once, when he was seeking two milch camels

which had strayed, he came to a tent where a woman lay in the pains of childbirth, and knowing that if she gave birth to a female child it would be buried alive, according to the barbarous practice of the Arabs, he ransomed it at the price of the two beasts. This act of generosity the poet is said often to have alluded to in his compositions. He was eminent for his eulogistic and satirical verses, and was one of the first who introduced antitheses and conceits into poetry, thus setting a bad example, which was afterwards only too largely followed. Farazdak was a nickname which he received on account of his dark complexion, the word being, according to De Sacy, a corruption of the Persian پرازده, which means a piece of burnt dough. Like other poets of the time, he was a partisan of the House of ʿAli, and one of his chief poems is in praise of Zayn al ʿÂbidîn, son of Al Ḥosayn. For this composition he was imprisoned in Ḥijâz by Hishâm, son of ʿAbd al Melik. He must have been a dissolute Moslem, for he gave rise to a proverb, "a night of Farazdak and Ḥalfeh," used to signify a night spent in debauchery. With other rakes he penetrated into a Christian convent; and passed the night with a nun named Ḥalfeh, drinking wine, eating pork, and dressing up in the nuns' habits. His adventure with his wife Nawâr is very celebrated, but is told by different writers with certain discrepancies. She was the daughter of one ʿAyn ibn Ḍobayʿ, and Farazdak had been commissioned to ask her in marriage; but becoming enamoured of her, he took her for himself. She afterwards forced him to divorce her, and he pronounced the necessary words in the presence of witnesses. When he found that the parting was irrevocable, he exclaimed:

I feel a repentance like that of Al Kosaʿî, now that Nawâr has been put away by me:

She was my Paradise, and I have left her like Adam when Aḍ Ḍirâr drove him forth. (Ḍirar is the angel of Paradise.)

I have been as one who puts out his eyes wilfully; who rises in the morning and the sun shines not to him. (See Ar. Prov. II. 376.)

In the commentary of Sherîshi it is said that in the same year, 110, died Al Farazdak and Jerîr, Al Ḥasan al Baṣrî and Ibn

Sîrîn; so that Basra lost at once its two great poets and its two great lawyers.

Al Kosa'î is said by some to have been a man of the tribe of Kosa', in Yemen, whose name was Moḥârib ibn Ḳays; by others he is said to have been of the Benû Sa'd ibn Thobyân, and to have been named 'Âmir ibn Hârith. His story, and all the verses which he is said to have improvised, are given at length by Sherîshi, and are translated from Moṭarrezi in De Sacy's Chrestomathy. I have space for only a very brief narrative. Al Kosa'î had found a fine *nabâ* tree, of which bows and arrows are made, and had fashioned a bow for himself. He took his stand in the night to shoot wild asses; he shot and pierced one, but the bow was so strong and good that the arrow went through the body, and struck on the rock behind. Al Kosa'î, hearing the sound in the darkness, thought he had missed his aim. Another troop came by, and he shot again, with the same seeming want of success. At last, after shooting five times, he broke the bow in a rage. When morning dawned he saw that five asses lay dead, pierced with his arrows. His repentance at having destroyed so excellent a bow passed into a proverb, and it is said "More repentant than Al Kosa'î." Ar. Prov. II. 776. It would appear that Al Kosa'î was less prudent than Pandarus, who only threatened that he would burn his bow if ever he returned home. Iliad V. 212.

THE TENTH ASSEMBLY.

Raḥbah.—A town on the Euphrates, between 'Ânah and Raḳḳah. It was restored and embellished by Mâlik ibn Ṭowḳ, who was governor of Al Jezîreh, and died under the Khalifate of Mo'tamid, A.D. 873. (Caussin de Perceval. Essai, Vol. II. p. 383.) This Mâlik was a descendant of 'Amr ibn Kulthûm, the author of one of the Mo'allaḳât, and had been in youth an officer in the service of Harûn ar Reshîd.

Shaving my head.—Sherîshi speaks of this practice as peculiar to the people of the East when they took the bath. We may conclude that it was not observed in Spain.

Slain his son.—The word فتك expresses exactly the meaning of our word *assassinate*. It is when one comes suddenly upon a man, or lies in wait for him, and kills him unawares.

To refer to the Governor.—تنافر is commonly used in the sense of referring to an arbitrator to decide priority in respect of nobility or pedigree.

Sulayk in his career.—Sulayk, a صعلوك, or vagrant robber of the Arabs, was famous for his speed of foot. He was, like ʿAntarah and Khofâf ibn Nedbeh, one of the اغربة العرب or mulattoes, his mother being a black slave, named Sulekeh, and his father ʿÂmir ibn Sinân of the tribe of Temîm. His speed was so great that he could outrun horses, and when the tribe of Bekr ibn Wâ'il made an incursion on Temîm, and saw Sulayk, they said, "If Sulayk sees us he will warn his people:" they accordingly mounted two of their number on fleet horses, to take him. He fled, and they pursued him all day without success; but the next morning they saw by his traces that he had fallen and broken his bow. They thought then that probably he had been exhausted by the first day's course; but as they followed they found that his footprints were still wide apart, and deep sunk in the sand, so that he could not be overcome with fatigue. When he reached his people and warned them, they did not believe him, for they judged it impossible that he could have run so great a distance. Arab. Prov. II. 152. He was captain of a band of from thirty to forty vagabonds, and made depredations on the Benû Rabîʿah, and the tribes of Yemen, sparing the descendants of Modar. During the winter he is said to have filled ostriches' eggs with water, and hidden them in the sand, so as to have a supply in time of heat. He was at last killed in one of his incursions by a certain Asad, son of Mudrik, shortly before the *islâm* of his tribe. Other Arabs have become proverbial for their speed of foot, and among them the poets

Shanfara and Ta'abbaṭa Sherran, also ʿAmr son of Barrâḳ. These three were companions, and an exploit of theirs, at the expense of the tribe of Bajîleh, is given in the Commentary of Sherîshi, but is too long to relate here. It may be found in De Sacy's *Chrestomathie*, Vol. II. p. 346. The most celebrated of these vagabond poets was Shanfara, the author of the poem called Lâmîyet al ʿArab. Shanfara belonged to the Benû Azd, and led a wandering life in the utmost misery and squalor, of which he boasts in the above-mentioned poem. The legend of his death is a strange one. It is said that he vowed to kill one hundred men of the Benû Salâmân. Whenever he met one of them he exclaimed, "To thine eye!" and he shot his arrow with such skill that he always pierced the eye of his foeman. Thus he slew ninety-nine; but at last Asîd ibn Jâbir, one of the hostile tribe, and himself a famous runner, together with his brother's son, Khâzim the Noḳmî, lay in wait for him. The Benû Salâmân tortured and killed him; but some time after one of them, seeing the mouldering body, gave the head a kick, and a piece of the skull, breaking off, fixed in his foot, of which wound he died. Thus, after death, Shanfara slew his hundredth enemy. See in Ḥamâseh the commentary on verses spoken by Shanfara before death, p. 242.

Made the boy speak.—استنطق is always used by the author in the sense of eliciting a sound in order to judge of it. The meaning here is that he made the boy speak to judge of his voice. In the Twelfth Assembly it is said, "he elicited the utterances of the lutes." The Governor did not want to hear the defence of the boy, but the sweetness of his tones.

Adorned foreheads with forelocks.—Literally, with hair evenly disposed over the forehead. A girl would cut off the ends of the hair over her forehead and dispose the short locks along the forehead so as to leave a clear space above the eyebrows. According to ʿÂyisheh the Prophet said, "The Angels in heaven adore God by the locks of women and the beards of men; and say, 'God be praised, who adorned men with beards and women with locks!'" He also said, "If one of you desire to marry a wife, let him

have regard to her hair as much as he has regard to her face." I cannot refrain from giving Rückert's version of this passage, as it not only shows the extraordinary genius of the German poet, but also how entirely his work is an imitation and not a translation of the original:

Da sprach der Alte dem Jungling: Sprich: Bei dem der die Stirne geschmückt mit dem Lockenkranz,—und die Augen mit dem dunklen Glanz,—die Augenbraunen mit der leisen Scheidung,—und die Wimpern mit der Saumbekleidung,—die Augenlieder mit der Schwere,—die Nasenwölbung mit der Hehre,—die Wangen mit dem Tagesanbruch,—und das Kinn mit dem Jugendanflug,—die Knospe des Mundes mit dem Aufsprung,—die Saüle des Halses mit dem Aufschwung,—die Haltung des Hauptes mit dem Sinken,—und das Lächeln mit dem Zahnblinken!—ich habe deinem Sohn nichts gethan zu Leide,—noch seinen Busen gemacht zu meines Schwertes Scheide.—Wo nicht, so schlage Gott mein Auge mit Decken,—und meine Wange mit Flecken,—meine Schläfe mit der Kahlheit,—meine Rose mit der Fahlheit,—meine süsse Frucht mit der Schaalheit,—meine Stirne mit den Falten,—meine Zähne mit den Spalten,—meinen Odem mit dem Dampfe,—meine Lippen mit dem Krampfe,—mein Feuer mit dem Froste,—meinen Spiegel mit dem Roste,—meinen Mond mit dem Schwinden,—meine Sonne mit dem Erblinden,—das Silber meines Kinns mit der Schwärze,—und das Elfenbein meiner Hüfte mit dem Schmerze! With respect to the طرّة of the Arabs, it may not be out of place to refer to the description of Herodotus, Book III. 8, *κείρονται δὲ περιτρόχαλα, περιξυροῦντες τοὺς κροτάφους, i.e.*, "They have their hair clipt round about." This seems to have been forbidden to the Israelites, Levit. xix. 27. See Gesenius on פְּאָה. Compare also Jeremiah ix. 25; xxv. 23; xlix. 32.

Eyes with their black and white.—Various definitions are given of حَوَر. One says that it means intense blackness of the black of the eye, with intense whiteness of the white thereof; another, that it is the blackness of all that appears of the eye, as is found in animals, such as gazelles, meaning, I presume, that

when a woman has the black of her eye so large that little or no white appears she possesses this quality. It is also said that حوراء is a woman beautiful as to the محاجر, *i.e.* the parts below or around the eyes, which appear when the rest of the face is veiled; also one, the white of whose eye appears in contrast with the black of the kohl. The first opinion is probably the soundest, and has been adopted in the translation. Sherîshi remarks that the poets have been lavish in their praises of black eyes, but that the praises of a زرقاء or woman having blue or light-coloured eyes is rare; although it is related by ʿÂyisheh of the Prophet that he said, "Blue-eyed women are of good omen." The Arabs appear to have associated softness and langour with the word حور, while زرق expressed, not only a light-coloured, but a glittering and fierce eye. Thus, when it was said to one, "Thou art ازرق," he answered, "The hawk is ازرق." Imr al Kays says (Dîwân, p. 34, Ar. Text):

And there rushed on him (a stag) in the morning, at the rising of the sun, early, the dogs of Ibn Morr, or the dogs of Ibn Sinbis,

Hungry, fierce-eyed (زُرقًا), as if from ardour and hasting, their eyes had become (bright as) the flower of the ʿadras.

The expression هو ازرق العين, *He is blue or light-eyed,* is used in speaking of one who cherishes malice, and is to be dreaded. A common, but not a satisfactory explanation, is that the Greeks, with whom the Arabs were often at war, had light eyes, so that a "light-eyed man" came to be synonymous with a deadly enemy. Compare Thirteenth Assembly, "my light or fierce-eyed enemy." For a censure on light eyes compare Ḥamâseh, Vol. I. p. 622; "Maidens not light-eyed, not blear-eyed."

Eyebrows with separation.—The having a clear space between the eyebrows, so that they are not joined, expresses to the Arabs the qualities of pleasantness and cheerfulness.

Smiling teeth with regularity.—فلج is the quality of having an opening or space between the roots of the teeth, given by nature. The making an artificial space between them by filing or pointing them (وشر or اشر) is held to be forbidden by Koran iv. 118, where it is said to be Satan who tempts people to "alter the

creation of God." According to Bayḍâwi the prohibition applies, among other things, to the plucking out the camel-stallion's eye (as was done to avert the Nemesis from excessive wealth), to tattooing the skin, and to filing the teeth.

Noses with straightness, or elevation, so that they should not be flat, for an elevated nose is among the attributes of beauty and princeliness.

Mouths with purity—More exactly the front teeth, or, as one might say, "the mouthful of teeth." شنب is sweetness and coolness of the mouth and teeth. Moṭarrezi says, "I found in the handwriting of my father that Rûbeh was asked concerning the meaning of this word, and he took a grain of pomegranate and said, 'This is شنب,' referring to its purity and the delicacy of its juice."—Commentary to Second Assembly.

At the beginning of the Assembly Sherîshi expatiates in his commentary on beauty and its attributes, as described in the terms of this oath, and each passage he annotates as it occurs with long quotations from the poets. These it is unnecessary to reproduce; but if the student desires a further acquaintance with the Arab ideas concerning female beauty he may be referred to the proverb, "What hast thou left behind thee, 'Aṣâm?" (Arab. Prov. II. 589). Al Ḥârith ibn 'Amr, king of Kinda, desired to wed a young lady, of whose charms he had heard; but being a cautious prince, he first sent an old woman named 'Aṣâm to learn from actual inspection whether she deserved her reputation. When she returned the king questioned her in the above words, and she gave him a full description of the transcendent beauties she had seen.

Made his head a sheath to my sword.—The word هامة often occurs in this sense; but there may possibly be an allusion to the belief of the pagan Arabs that a bird called هامة or صدى sprang from the head of a murdered man, and cried اسقوني, "Give me to drink," until revenge was taken. This bird was supposed to be the soul or personality of the murdered man, so that one might translate, "I have not sheathed my sword in his life." Mohammed put an end to this superstition. The Arabs

considered the head the seat of life. It is, perhaps, in this sense that Shanfara says of his enemies, "They bear away my head, and in my head is the chief part of me, while my body is left on the field." Ḥamâseh, p. 243. The Commentator observes that four out of the five senses have their seat in the head.

My palm shoot with greenness: my white teeth with discolouration. طلع is used as in the Second Assembly as a similitude for the teeth. بلح is applied to dates while they continue green and small.

My rose with the ox-eye.—In Lane's Lexicon بهار is said to be "buphthalmum or ox-eye," a plant having a yellow flower, growing in spring. The meaning is, "may my rosy cheek be smitten with yellowness."

My musk with a foul steam.—The pleasant odour of my breath with offensiveness.

My full moon with waning; literally, *with interlune*, the period before the new moon, when the moon does not appear at all. The meaning here is "may my beauty decay and vanish."

My silver with tarnishing—"May my white cheeks be blackened with the hairs of a coming beard!" The succeeding metaphors have a similar meaning.

Tempted: or suggested to him. For the use of this word see Koran xlvii. 27.

The pupil of my eye.—انسان, literally "the man of the eye," is the image that is seen reflected in the black of the eye as in a mirror: Hebrew אִישׁוֹן. Gesenius remarks that the same figure is to be found in several languages, as in Persian, مردک and مرد چشم; in Greek, *κόρη, κοράσιον*; in Latin *pupa, pupilla;* in Spanish, *la niña del ojo*, etc.

Shell may get clear of chick.—A proverb attributed to an Arab of the Benû Asad, who acting as escort to a merchant said to him, "When we have reached such a place shell will be clear of chick," meaning that there would be no more need of his protection.

As the wolf went guiltless of the blood of the son of Jacob.—When Joseph's brethren sold him they told his father that he had

been devoured by a wolf: when their falsehood was discovered the wolf was held guiltless. Koran xii., called *Joseph*.

Ibn Surayj was a great doctor of the rite of Shâfi'î and Kadi of Shiraz, in Persia. His full name was Abû 'l 'Abbâs Aḥmed ibn 'Omar ibn Surayj; for his zeal and learning he was surnamed *The Bright Fire*. His life is given by Ibn Khallikân, who says, "He surpassed in talent all the pupils of Ash Shâfi'î. The catalogue of his works contains four hundred articles. He was an active defender of the sect of Ash Shâfi'î, and refuted its adversaries; he wrote also observations on the works of Mohammed ibn al Ḥasan al Ḥanafi. The Shaykh Abû Ḥâmid al Isfarayni said of him, 'In our knowledge of the plain points of jurisprudence we keep pace with Abû 'l 'Abbâs, but he surpasses us in the niceties of that science.'" The Moslems had a notion that every century some great man was raised up for the defence of the faith, and it was said to him, "God raised up 'Omar ibn 'Abd al 'Azîz at the beginning of the first century after the Hijra, that he might manifest orthodoxy and destroy innovation; then God, in his mercy, placed at the opening of the next century the Imâm Ash Shâfi'î, that he might manifest orthodoxy and force innovation to be hid; and God graciously conferred thee on the beginning of the third century." He wrote verses, some of which have been preserved, and though a hot and apparently a rude controversialist, was not deficient in liberality to his opponents. He died in the year 306, at the age of fifty-seven. Ḥarîri, it must be remembered, belonged to his sect.

The Wolf's Tail.—This is the name given to a deceptive brightness which appears in the heavens before the dawn, and then passes away: it is called the "false" or "lying" dawn. It is not improbable that this is the Zodiacal light.

A letter of Mutelemmis.—This phrase, which is equivalent to the classic *literæ Bellerophonteæ* had its origin in one of the most celebrated incidents of early Arab history; the treachery of 'Amr, King of Hira, which caused the destruction of the young poet Ṭarafeh, author of one of the Mo'allakât, and nearly involved in the same fate Ṭarafeh's uncle Mutelemmis, also a poet.

Ṭarafeh was the most perfect type of the wild and dissolute but gifted poets of the Ignorance. He was the son of Al ʿAbd, son of Sofyân, son of Ḥarmaleh, of the tribe of Bekr Wâ'il, and of the race of Moḍar. From early youth his genius for poetry, and his license of tongue, were remarkable. One day, when he was playing with the children of his age, his uncle Mutelemmis was reciting a poem which described, as was common among the Arabs, the rare qualities of a camel. He said—

I mount a dark-red male-camel, firm of flesh, or else a she-camel of Himyar, fleet in course, driving the pebbles with her hoof that crushes them.

"See the he-camel transformed into a she," exclaimed Ṭarafeh, and the phrase became proverbial to express a sudden and inelegant transition. Arab. Prov. II. 246. Mutelemmis, much offended, told the boy to put out his tongue. Ṭarafeh did so; it was dark in colour, and Mutelemmis said, "That black tongue will be thy ruin." When Ṭarafeh grew up, he surpassed all his contemporary poets in debauchery, and addicted himself completely to love, wine, and gambling. His great poem was composed on the occasion of the loss of the herd of camels belonging to himself and his brother, which was carried off by a hostile tribe, while Ṭarafeh was spending his time in pleasure. A few verses from this composition will give an idea of his character and his genius:

If all my tribe were gathered, thou wouldst find me at the head of a kin that is generous, sought of suppliants.

My two companions in wine are youths noble of aspect, and at eve comes a singing girl to us, clad in a bright robe or a saffron-dyed tunic.

The bosom of her dress is open; she resists not the caresses of the guests; delicate are her naked breasts.

When we say, "Let us hear thy melody," she begins gently, with a soft gaze at us; she puts not forth her voice:

But presently she raises her song, so that thou wouldst think mothers be wailing over a babe that is dead.

My ever-drinking of wine ceases not, nor my pleasure, nor my selling and spending my wealth inherited or gotten:

Until all my kindred have shunned me; I am separated from them as men separate the sickly camel.

Yet do the poor, the kinless, not deny my acquaintance; no, nor the lords of the wide-stretched tent. (Though his own tribe have abandoned

him for his profligacy, yet he always has a friend among the poor whom he relieves, and the rich who delight in his society.)

O thou who blamest me for that I seek the shout of war, and give myself to pleasures, say, canst thou make me live for ever?

If thou hast no power to ward off fate, leave me to enjoy before it comes, though I squander all I have.

I swear that but for three things, which are a man's joys, I would not care if the visitors turned away despairing from my bed of death.

The first of these is to elude the women of my family, who would censure me, and to drink the dark-red wine that foams as the water mixes with it.

Another is to urge into the fight, when one in danger calls to me, a broad-made steed, that rushes like the wolf of the ghaḍa wood which a man rouses to flight as it comes to drink.

The third is to while away a dark dull day (for then darkness is a pleasure) with a young beauty, under a lofty-columned tent.

The man of noble spirit drinks deep while he lives; should we both die to-morrow, fault-finder, thou shalt know which of us will thirst.

I see that the grave of him that is careful, that hoards his wealth, differs not from the grave of the dissolute, the spendthrift:

A hillock of earth is on each, with some flat stones laid together.

The young poet, at length, thoroughly ruined, left his kindred and repaired to the Court of ʿAmr, son of Munthir III:, king of Hira, commonly called ʿAmr son of Hind, from the name of his mother. He was accompanied by his uncle Mutelemmis, whose real name was Jerîr son of ʿAbd al Masîḥ. ʿAmr appointed them to attend on his brother Ḳâbûs, according to the Arab custom by which a man had, generally, two boon companions. Ḳâbûs was a boorish prince, and treated the two poets with great indignity; sometimes wearying them by forcing them to make long excursions in attendance on him; at others keeping them at the door of his tent while he drank within. At last the passionate and satirical Ṭarafeh made some verses upon him, beginning:

Oh would that in place of king ʿAmr we had but a few milch-cows lowing about our tent!

Sure Ḳâbûs, son of Hind, will ruin his kingdom; he is an exceeding fool.

These verses were brought to the ears of ʿAmr in the following manner:—A certain ʿAbd ʿAmr, a favourite of the king, had married a sister of Ṭarafeh. The poet, however, had said satirically of him,

There is nought good about him but his money, and that waist which is so slender when he stands.

The point of this was that ʿAbd ʿAmr was enormously fat. The king was one day rallying him while he was naked in the bath, and said, "Your brother-in-law Ṭarafeh must have seen you as you now are when he made that verse." "Ṭarafeh," answered ʿAbd ʿAmr, "makes verses on you and your brother as well as on me;" he then repeated to the king the satirical lines of the poet on the king's brother Ḳâbûs. Now this ʿAmr ibn Hind was a most ferocious and vindictive prince. He had burned alive ninety-nine men and one woman of the tribe of Temîm in accordance with a vow of vengeance he had made to destroy a hundred of the race. This deed, which is known in Arab history as the "second Day of Owârah," had gained for him the appellation of Al Moḥarriḳ, the *Burner*. Compare the proverb, "Ill-fated is he of the Barâjim who approaches." Arab. Prov. I. 5. He now determined to destroy both Ṭarafeh and Mutelemmis. Sending for them he asked them if they desired to leave his Court. They answered in the affirmative; and he then told them that he would give them letters to Abû Kârib, Governor of Hejer or Baḥrayn for the king of Persia. Taking the letters, Mutelemmis and Ṭarafeh set out. Mutelemmis suspected treachery, and as neither of the poets could read, he presented his letter to a young man in the way, and asked him what it contained. It was a request to the Governor of Hejer to put the bearer to death. Mutelemmis destroyed the letter, and implored Ṭarafeh to fly with him into Syria. Ṭarafeh obstinately refused, continued his journey to Abû Kârib, who arrested him, and caused him to be buried alive. Thus perished one of the most gifted of the early Arab poets, when he had scarcely attained manhood. He is often called *Ibn al ʿIshrîn, the youth of twenty years.* ʿAmr ibn Hind was afterwards slain by the poet warrior ʿAmr ibn Kulthûm, author of the Moʿallaḳah, in revenge for an insult offered to his mother by Hind, the mother of ʿAmr; whence the proverb, "Quicker to slay than ʿAmr ibn Kulthûm." Arab. Prov. II. 233.

Tell the Governor.—The verses are of the بحر خفيف, which is a metre of the fourth circle, or دائرة المشتبه. This circle consists of the primitive feet مفاعيلن فاعلاتن مفاعيلن, which is the normal form of the مضارع. The measure of the خفيف is فاعلاتنّ مستفعلن فاعلاتنّ twice; the وتد of the first and third feet being مجموع, and that of the second مفروق. The measure of the present verses is تامّ, or normal; being of the first ضرب of the first عروض. Of the زحاف, there enter into this metre خبن, and كفّ, and شكل, which is the union of the two former. It is evident that these licences may affect any of the feet, since in فاعلاتن the فا and the تن are اسباب, and also in مستفعلن, the مس and the لن are اسباب, the تفع being a وتد مفروق. So that in the خفيف, the foot فاعلاتنّ may become فعلاتُ, and مستفعلنّ may become متفعلُ. Instances of these licences will be found on examining the verses in the text.

To seek the traces after the substance.—These words, which have become proverbial, were first spoken by Mâlik ibn ʿAmr al ʿÂmili when he slew the king of Ghassân. The story is told in the commentary to the proverb: Arab. Prov. I. 221. The king, to punish the tribe of ʿÂmileh had imprisoned Mâlik and his brother Simâk. One day he called them before him and told them that he should put one of them to death. Each begged to be the victim, that his brother might be spared. The king selected Simâk, and he was executed. While going to his doom he improvised a poem, in which was the verse:

I swear that if they had slain Mâlik I would have been to them as a snake that watches to bite. (Two more lines are given by Sherîshi).

One day their mother heard a horseman reciting these lines, and she roused Mâlik to take vengence for his brother. He watched the king until he was on a journey with a small escort, and then fell upon him. The attendants offered Mâlik a hundred camels, the usual blood-wit for a murder, if he would spare the king. He said, "I will not seek a trace (or, as we should say, a *shadow*) after a substance," and at once killed the king. The proverb corresponds to Æsop's fable of the dog and the bone.

The ill-fate of Al Ḥosayn. — The misfortunes and death of Al Ḥosayn, son of ʿAli, are too well known to require notice here.

The shoes of Ḥonayn: that is a bad bargain or a bootless errand. Ḥonayn was a shoemaker with whom an Arab of the desert haggled about the price of a pair of shoes. At last the man would not purchase, and they parted angrily. Ḥonayn resolved on revenge; so he went forward on the road by which he knew the Arab must pass and threw down one of the shoes. The Arab, when he came up, said, "How like this is to one of Ḥonayn's shoes; if the other were with it I would take them." In the mean time Ḥonayn had gone on and thrown down the other shoe, and then hidden himself near. When the Arab came to the second shoe he repented that he had not picked up the first; and fastening his camel, he returned to fetch it. Ḥonayn at once mounted and rode off, having thus gained a camel in exchange for a pair of shoes. When the Arab went back to his tribe they said to him, "What hast thou brought from thy journey?" He said, "I have brought back nothing but Ḥonayn's shoes," which became proverbial for a bootless errand. Compare the Twenty-sixth Assembly, "I will depart from thee with the shoes of Ḥonayn." This is the legend as told by Sherîshi; but two others are given (Arab. Prov. I. 461), in the commentary on the proverb, *More bootless than Ḥonayn.* They were all probably fabricated to explain a popular phrase, the origin of which was lost.

Piece-meal.—Naṣîf al Yazaji, in his letter to De Sacy, says that the original form is not شذراً مذراً but شذراً و مذراً; and that the first half is indeclinable as being part of a word, and the second as containing the meaning of the elided conjunction. Compare Alfîyeh, verse 15.

Cared not.—For the form أَبَلَّ see Lane's Lexicon, Book I., p. 255.

THE ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY.

Sâweh is a town between Rayy and Hamadân, at a distance of twenty-two parasangs from the former.

By visiting the tombs.—Said the Prophet, "Visiting the tombs makes men self-denying in this world and mindful of the next." An authoritative Tradition of Anas says, "Said the Prophet of God, 'I forbade you once to visit the tombs; but visit them, for they soften the heart, and fill the eye with tears, and bring to mind the next world.'" This is the Tradition referred to in the text. A man said to 'Âyisheh, "Mother of the Faithful, I have a disease; hast thou a remedy for it?" She said, "What is thy disease?" He said, "Hardness of heart." She said, "A bad disease is thine; but visit the sick, and attend funerals, and keep in mind death." It was said to 'Ali, "Why dost thou dwell near the burying-ground?" He said, "I find them good neighbours, and truthful; they restrain their tongues, and yet they speak of the next world." 'Omar ibn 'Abd al 'Azîz is related to have visited the tombs of his predecessors of the House of Omayyeh and moralized on their being brought thus low. 'Omar ibn al Khaṭṭâb (the Khalif) related, "We went forth with the Prophet and he took seat at a grave, and I was the nearest of the people to him; and he wept, upon which we wept also. He said, 'What makes you weep?' We said, 'Because thou weepest.' He said, 'This is the grave of my mother Âmineh; I asked leave of my Lord to visit her and he permitted me: then I asked leave that I might pray forgiveness for her and he refused me: and I feel the pity of a son.'" 'Othmân wept when he stood by a tomb.

A corpse; literally, one *enshrouded* or *gathered* up in his grave clothes. جنازة is a bier when the corpse is on it; otherwise it is نعش or سرير.

Sepulchred the dead.—It would be more accurate to say *niched,* for لحد is the niche or compartment in the side of the grave where the corpse is placed in a sitting posture. On

the subject of funerals there is much interesting information in the *Kitâb al janâ'iz* in the first volume of Al Bokhâri.

Leaning on a staff.—Holding it in his hand as a مخصرة, and leaning on it. For this word, see Lane. A staff was the common symbol of dignity carried by a preacher, and was introduced early in Islam when it was defended by the precedent of Moses, who carried a staff.

Let those who work, etc.—Koran xxxvii. 59. "Truly this is a mighty gain: let each that works work for the like of this." These words, which refer to the happiness of the next world, are taken by Abû Zayd as a sort of text.

As ye laughed not... as ye walked not.—These are *manṣûb* on the *maṣdar*. See note to Fourth Assembly on words *an earliness beyond the earliness of the crow.*

Gifts, usually applied to the present which a poet receives from a prince. (De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 79). For the occurrence to which the origin of the word is attributed, see Lane, Book I. p. 485. The more probable explanation is that it was originally the supply of water or provision with which a man *passed* from one place to another in the desert; it then came to mean a supply of provision, such as a host gave to a traveller for his journey after having entertained him. Lastly, it was applied generally to a voluntary present or largess.

The preparing of banquets.—Naṣîf al Yazaji, in his Critical Epistle, finds fault with De Sacy for explaining المآدب by المطاعم. He proceeds to mention the various names of entertainments among the Arabs, as follows:—If it be a feast at child-birth, it is called خُرس; if it be for (the first shaving of) the child, it is called عقيقة; if at circumcision, إعذار; if on the day that the child finishes the learning of the Koran, it is called حِذاق; if on occasion of an offer of marriage, it is مَلاك; if at a wedding, وليمة; if on the finishing of a house, وكيرة; if on return from a journey, نقيعة; if at beginning the month of Rejeb, عقيرة; if for a guest, قرى; if for any other cause, مأدبة. It is impossible to deny the critic's learning, and that De Sacy uses a word that is not synonymous.

Again no: surely ye shall learn.—Koran cii. 4.

O thou who claimest understanding.—These verses are of the metre هزج, which belongs, like *rejez* and *reml*, to the third circle; the normal measure is مفاعيلن three times in each hemistich; but this is seldom used, the ordinary measure being the repetition of the foot twice in each hemistich, as here. Of the زحاف, there enter into this measure قبض and كفّ. The peculiarity of the poem in the text is that the metre is what is called مُسمَّط. The meaning of this word is *strung as beads*, and it is used to denote that a certain constant rhyme recurs throughout, as an emerald or a piece of gold recurs at regular intervals among the beads of a chaplet. There are various kinds of the verses called *musammaṭât*, and they may be composed of lines of any metre, but they present always the same feature of a continuous rhyme running through the poem. It is, in fact, the variation and lightening of the ancient monotonous, one-rhymed *ḳaṣîdeh* of the Arabs by the introduction of the stanza, a change to which parallels may be found in other literatures. The stanzas in the text are made up of two verses of *hezej*, of which the three first hemistiches rhyme together, and the fourth has the recurring rhyme. In analogy with ordinary versification the rhyme of the first triplet is identical with the recurring rhyme; the other triplets have each its independent rhyme. Many varieties of *musammaṭât* are to be found, sometimes the hemistiches having the varying rhyme are in fours or fives; sometimes, it is said, the number changes in the same poem. The recurring rhyme is called عمود القصيدة, *the prop of the poem.* In Freytag's *Darstellung der Arabischen Verskunst*, page 406, a specimen is given of one of these compositions, into which verses of an ancient poem of the Ḥamâseh have been introduced. At a later period the fancy of the Arabs for variations of metre produced the elaborate poems called مُوشّحات, in which the poets of Andalusia excelled. In these compositions the strangest liberties are taken with the old versification; as, for instance, the giving

one rhyme to the first hemistiches of a series of verses, while the second hemistiches have a different rhyme; the mingling of various metres, or various forms of the same metre, in the poem; the rhyme of the opening verses recurring, like a refrain, at intervals throughout the poem. Abû Bekr Yaḥya ibn ʿAbd ar Raḥmân, who lived in the sixth century of the Hijra, was highly esteemed for these compositions. Seven of the most celebrated of them, الدرارى السبع, have been published, together with some modern imitations, by the American missionaries at Beyrout. For a survey of these and other metrical eccentricities, the student is referred to Freytag's *Darstellung*. A specimen of *Musammaṭât* is to be found in the Huthalî Dîwân. They are by Jenûb, the sister of ʿAmr thû 'l kelb. Fâris Shidyaḳ says that they should be read with the *ḳâfiyeh muḳideh*. Aventures de Fariac, p. 13 of Theneb al kitâb.

Ṣirâṭ.—This word signifies originally a way or path, and is used in this sense in Koran i. 5. Its special signification as the path over which men must pass after death,—a path like a bridge, as narrow as a hair and as sharp as a sword—is derived from a Tradition of Moḥammed, "On the day of resurrection the people shall be sent over the Path, and they shall be scattered off it like moths into the fire, but God shall save whom he will." Compare Koran ci. 3. Khadîjeh, and one or two others will be excused this perilous trial. On the form of the word there is a difference of opinion. According to Bayḍâwi, on Koran i., the primitive form is سراط, from سرط, *he swallowed*, since the road or way may be said to swallow, or devour, those who walk in it; analogous to which is لقم. But the س is changed into ص, that it may correspond with the ط which is of the letters called مطبقات; that is of the letters formed by bringing the tongue in contact with the roof of the mouth. These letters are four in number—ص, ض, ط, and ظ. (See his commentary on الم, at the beginning of the second Sura). By this the pronunciation was rendered more easy. But in order that the original may not be too far departed from,

the sound of the ص is sometimes turned slightly (صْمَ) to the sound of ز, which is between those of س and ص. But صراط is according to the dialect of Koraysh, and is the authoritative reading. On the interchangeability of س and ص, see De Sacy's *Chrest. Arabe.* vol. II., p. 230; Baydâwi on word اسبغ, at xxxi. 19; also Forty-sixth Assembly.

Plume him whose plumage hath fallen.—Compare Forty-first Assembly: "Plume the wing of the noble if his fortune have stripped it."

The garb of impudence.—The word in the text is specially applied to the dress in which a slave is exposed for sale. For "strong of sinew," or "strongly braced," see Koran lxxvi. 28.

How many, Abû Zayd?—A pretty effect is produced by making Hârith address the impostor in verses like his own, and Abû Zayd reply in the same manner.

THE TWELFTH ASSEMBLY.

The Ghûṭah.—This is the fertile plain in which the city of Damascus is situated. A ghûṭah is a low, well-watered plain; and the name is applied especially to one of the richest spots with which the Arabs were acquainted. Some writers have rather fancifully identified the עוץ of Job with this place. (See Gesenius, *sub voce*). A commentator says, "The Ghûṭah of Damascus is reckoned among the gardens or paradises of the earth, which, according to Al Wâḥidi, are four in number; the Ghûṭah of Damascus, the valley or pass of Bawwân, the Ubulleh of Basra, and the Sughd of Samarcand." To these the Andalusians would add the Vega of Granada. According to Al Asma'î, the beautiful places of the earth were three, Damascus, Samarcand, and Basra. Sherîshi compares Damascus with Irem thât al-'Imâd, for its beauty and splendour. Irem with the Columns was the city which Sheddâd, son of 'Âd, built for himself before his accursed race was destroyed by

God; it is mentioned in Koran lxxxix. 6. It remains invisible to the eyes of mortals in the desert near Aden; though God sometimes permits it to be seen, as was the case in the days of the Khalif Mu'âwiyeh, when one 'Abû Kilâbeh, crossing the deserts of Yemen in search of a run-away camel, came upon it, and brought back some of the jewels with which its streets are strewed. When a place is exceedingly beautiful and magnificent it is said to be like Irem al 'Imâd. It is a Tradition that Mohammed, before his death, held out to his disciples the possession of Damascus as the chief incentive to an invasion of Syria. The Moslem legend is that the city received its name from its founder Dimeshk, son of Nimrod, son of Canaan, or as others say, Dimeshk, son of Bâtir, son of Mâlik, son of Arphaxad, son of Shem, son of Noah.

Steeds.—Having short and fine hair, which is one of the signs of a good breed.

Freedom of arm; fulness of store: Literally, "of udder." These metaphors are used to signify ease of life and affluence. Compare Job xxi, 24: "His breasts are full of milk."

Agreement was completed.—استتب, it became complete and in a right state; literally, it demanded loss, or diminution, or destruction; because these sometimes follow completeness: or the ب may be substituted for م, the meaning being استتم (Lane).

From every tribe.—The largest division or tribe of Arabs descended from a common ancestor was called شعب; a part of this was قبيلة; a part of this again was فصيلة; a part of this was عمارة; a part of this بطن; and, lastly, a part of this فخذ. The single family was called بيت.

In the clans.—حي appears to be a word of general signification, applied to the descendants of one ancestor, whether many or few. It is sometimes equivalent to شعب, sometimes to قبيلة, and sometimes to بطن.

The gate of Jayrûn.—A gate of the great mosque of Damascus, built by the magnificent Khalif Welîd, son of 'Abd al Melik, on the site of a church of St. John, and still known as the mosque of the Benû Omayyeh. This celebrated structure, which

is the exemplar after which so many great works have been executed, both in the East and in Spain, has been so often described that it is needless to speak further of it here. It occupied the Khalif during the ten years of his reign, from 86 to 96; but did not prevent him from enriching Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem with costly monuments. In Mecca he adorned the Ka'beh with gold; in Medina he enlarged the mosque of the Prophet's tomb. Jayrûn is said to be the name of an ancient patriarch, son of the builder of Damascus. It was probably applied also to one of the gates of the city, for in De Sacy's Commentary we find, "Jayrûn is the name of one of the gates of Damascus, on the eastern side," and it is more likely that the travellers assembled outside the city.

Tying and untying, and plaiting and twining.—Metaphorical expressions, signifying the formation of schemes, complicated or simple, and the subsequent abandonment of them.

The rosary of women.—A string of beads, used in worship to count the number of prayers or ejaculations. The use of this rosary is described in Lane's Modern Egyptians. The worshipper, at a certain period of his devotions, repeats "The perfection of God;" "Praise be to God;" and "God is most great," each thirty-three times, and he counts these repetitions with a string of beads. The beads are 99, and they have a mark between each thirty-three. They are of aloes, or other odoriferous or precious wood, or of coral, or of certain fruit-stones, or seeds, &c. Chapter iii.

As the garb of monks.—Religious devotees in Islam assimilated their practices to those of the Christian monks, in spite of a celebrated Tradition of the Prophet; "No monkery in Islam, and no celibacy." This Tradition is alluded to in the Forty-third Assembly. The Prophet said to 'Akâf ibn Wadâ'ah, "Hast thou a wife?" He answered, "No." "Then," said the Prophet, "thou belongest to the brotherhood of the devils. If thou wilt be one of the Christian monks, then keep with them; but if thou wilt be one of us, know that it is our custom to marry."

Giddiness from watchings.—Literally, the look of religious intoxication produced by watching and contemplation.

To steal a hearing.—As the devils do when they approach heaven to listen to what passes there. It is said, in Koran xv. 16: "We have set towers (constellations of the zodiac) in heaven, we have made them goodly to those who look thereon. —And we guard them from every devil, cast at with stones:— Save when one steals a hearing, and then a flame, visible to all, follows him."—This is the foundation of the belief that shooting stars are darts hurled by the angels against listening demons. Compare xxxvii. 6. I have seen it somewhere stated that a great flight of shooting stars, no doubt one of those whose period modern science has so accurately determined, was seen in the time of the Prophet, and gave rise to the revelations on this subject in the Koran. Certain days on which such phenomena occurred were afterwards known as ايّام الخافقات.

Their secret was manifest to him.—Either the *state of concealment departed or ceased,* or else *what was in a state of concealment became apparent,* from بَرَاح, meaning "what is open and apparent of land." This is a phrase from a traditional verse of Shiḳḳ the Diviner, one of the most famous personages of ancient Arabia. As Shiḳḳ and Saṭîḥ are often alluded to, and the latter is spoken of in the Eighteenth Assembly, it may be as well to give some account of them. Ibn Khallikân says, in his life of Khâlid al Ḳasri, one of the officers of the Khalif Hishâm, "Shiḳḳ was a son of the aunt of Saṭîḥ, the diviner, who foretold the coming of the Prophet, as is related in the Sîrat ar Resûl of Ibn Hishâm." He then proceeds to describe them. We learn from him, and other authorities, that they were two deformed beings. Shiḳḳ was only half a man, and for this reason was called Shiḳḳ (half). He had but one cheek, one arm, and one leg. Saṭîḥ was without bones; he was a mere mass of flesh, with his face in his stomach, for he had neither head nor neck. He could not sit up except when angry. He then swelled and took a sitting posture. They received the gift of pro-

phecy from Ẓarîfeh, the same who predicted to her husband, ʿAmr Muzayḳîyâ, the bursting of the dyke of Mareb. In an extract from the book called Kitâb al Jomân, given by De Sacy (Mémoires de l'Académie Royale, Vol. 48), the following account is given of this occurrence: "Shiḳḳ had received from God only half the form of a man. Saṭîḥ was a shapeless mass of flesh; he had no limbs, and his face was in his breast. In their time there was among the Arabs a woman called Ẓarîfeh, daughter of ʿAmr ibn ʿÂmir. None of the children of Adam had ever had more intercourse with Jinn, or was more able to make them speak by divination and auguries. When she was about to die she sent for Shiḳḳ and Saṭîḥ, on account of their deformity, and the influence that demons had possessed upon them, and she spat in their mouth, and bequeathed to them her Jinn, after which she died, and was buried at Al Johfah." The narrative goes on to say that they succeeded her in the functions of divination, and rose to the highest degree of skill. Shiḳḳ died leaving behind him children. Saṭîḥ also died about the time Moḥammed was born; each of them having lived three hundred, or, as some say, six hundred years. The prophecy of Saṭîḥ respecting the Prophet is told as follows by the same author: The Tobbaʿ of Yemen had a troublesome dream, the matter of which he could not remember. He summoned his wise men, who declared themselves ready to interpret if he could tell them what he had dreamed; but only Shiḳḳ and Saṭîḥ were able to tell him the dream itself. It was that a dove had flown from a holy place, and had settled in the Tihâmeh, the sea-coast region south of Mecca; and Saṭîḥ interpreted it to mean that a noble prophet would arise who would destroy idols, and teach the best of religions. According to Ṭabari, from whom de Sacy also gives an extract, the two diviners predicted to Rabîʿah, son of Naṣr, a Jewish king of Yemen, that the Abyssinians should conquer the country and govern it, that they should be expelled, and that afterwards a prophet should arise among the Arabs, bringing a new religion, which all men should embrace, and which should endure in Yemen to the Day of Judgment. These

theological prophecies have obtained for the two soothsayers great celebrity. The narrative in the Sîrat ar Resûl will be found at page 9, Wüstenfeld's edition, Göttingen 1860. It relates, like that of Ṭabari, to Rabî'at ibn Naṣr. The Jinn of this Arab divineress may be compared with the אוֹב of the Israelite wizards and witches: Levit. xx. 27; 1 Sam. xxviii. 8.

Your care relieve itself: or get rid of its cause, as the egg gets rid of the chick. For a similar expression see Arab. Prov. II. 220.

The Semâweh.—The Syrian desert, said to be called so because of the ruins and traces of the dwellings of Thamûd found in it; the word meaning the same as *shakhṣ*. European travellers have fully confirmed the existence of these remarkable ruins.

For carrying him; literally for *balancing* with him on the same camel; one riding on the right side of the saddle, and the other on the left.

The Mother of the Koran is the first chapter, and is said to be so called because it *contains* the doctrines or principles of the whole book; namely, due praise to God, exhortations to duty by bidding and forbidding, promises and threats. At Koran ci. 6, it is said of him whose works shall be light in the balance, that his أُمّ is the Pit of Fire.

The Lights of his kindred, the Keys of his victory.—Under these symbols the Muhâjirûn and the Anṣâr are supposed to be designated.

Place me by thy mercy among thy servants who do aright.—This is part of the prayer of Solomon, which he uttered when he heard the ant bid its swarm return to the nest for fear of being trodden by his armies. Koran xxvii. 19.

From thyself helping power.—Koran xvii. 82.

The heaven with its constellations.—These are the first words of the 85th Sura, called the *Towers* or *Constellations*. بُرُج, πύργος, is the name given to the principal constellations which surround the heavens, as a city is surrounded by its towers. The name is applied to the twelve signs of the zodiac, and also, it would seem, to the twenty-eight mansions of the moon. Com-

pare Koran xv., 16; and xxv. 62. Baydâwi, on the 85th Sura, derives the word from برج, to be conspicuous, though it is evident that the verb is formed from the noun; and he attributes the name to the sun and moon seeming to rest in the chief constellations, and go forth from them as from towers or citadels. Naṣîf al Yazaji has united the names of the signs of the zodiac in some verses: Maḳâmât, p. 215.

The earth with its plains.—فج is a broad valley between hills, or a path leading up to or between them. Compare Koran lxxi. 19 and xxii. 28, where it is rendered by Baydâwi, طريق.

The pouring flood and the blazing sun.—Koran lxxviii. 13.

The house-tops of ʿÂnah.—طلل is a common word signifying anything that appears standing in the distance, particularly a building or its ruins. The older poets often began their song with a lamentation on beholding the طلل of the camp or habitation which had been deserted by the tribe of their mistress. Here it is applied to the summits of the buildings of the city appearing at a distance over the desert plain. ʿÂnah on the Euphrates was at an early period celebrated for its wine, which was carried into the heart of Arabia, and inspired the wild and dissolute poets of the Ignorance with their impassioned declamation. In one of his poems, Imr al Ḳays says of a place from which one or more of his beloved ones had departed,—

"I lingered, amid the traces of the camp, like one drunken, who has been drinking of wine at early morn,

"Of wine the first of the cask, red as the blood of gazelles; old wine of ʿÂnah, or of the vines of Shebâm." Dîwân, p. 36, Arabic text.

The exposed and the hidden; the corded and the sealed, i.e. the various kinds of goods they brought with them, both what was open to view and what was corded in bales or sealed up in boxes.

The light, the adorning, i.e. he chose only the most portable, such as gold and silver, and such as served for ornament, as jewels.

The lutes.—From العود is derived our word *lute*.

I cling to journeying.—The metre of these verses, which are

musammaṭât, like those in the last Assembly, is *muteḳârib*, which has been already described.

Pride.—نفار is literally the contention before an umpire on the titles of a man or tribe to nobility or honour over others; as was the custom with the Arabs of the Ignorance. It was called so because each one said, after recounting his claims to honour, ايّنا اعزّ نفراً. The most celebrated *muñâfarah* of the Ignorance was that between ʿÂmir ibn aṭ Ṭofayl ibn Mâlik ibn Jaʿfar and Alḳamat ibn ʿOlâthah, a descendant of the same Jaʿfar, for the leadership of the Benû ʿÂmir ibn Ṣaʿṣaʿah. The two chiefs staked a hundred camels, and applied to two men of the Ḳoraysh, afterwards very celebrated in the history of Islam, Abû Sofyân ibn Ḥarb and Abû Jahl, to judge between them. These declined, as did also some others; but at last the task was undertaken by Haram ibn Koṭbah, who reconciled the two rivals by declaring that they were equal in merit. See commentary to De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 316, and Caussin de Perceval, Essai, vol. II., p. 564. Haram on this occasion made use of a phrase which has become proverbial, "Ye are as equal as the two knees of the full-grown tawny (آدم) camel stallion which come to the ground together;" that is, as the knees of a good and well-trained camel. This is often said of two things that are equal. Compare Prov. Arab. II. 361. In the *munâfarah* between ʿAbbâd ibn Anf and Maʿbad ibn Naḍlah, the judge, Ḍamrah son of Ḍamrah, took a bribe of a hundred camels from the former and decided for him: the judge became infamous, as the first before Islam who had taken a bribe. On learning what had been done, Maʿbad exclaimed, "There is no leap left in the wild ass;" a phrase which became proverbial with reference to any who had had honourable qualities and had lost them. Prov. Arab. II. 603. Compare Ḥamâseh, vol. I., p. 115, where are given certain verses addressed to Ḍamrah by a man whom he had upbraided. A singular *munâfarah* was that between the Benû Fezârah and the Benû Hilâl ibn ʿÂmir, as to which had been the more disgraced by an act of one of their people. Among the Benû Hilâl was a man named Mokhârik, who had received the nick-

name of Mâdir, the Befouler, because, being of a morose and envious disposition, he had watered his own camels at a cistern, and then befouled with dung the little that remained of the water in order that no others might drink. On the other hand, a man of the Fezârah being in company with some who were hunting, *objectum est eum asini sylvestris veretrum edisse.* The stake was a hundred camels, and it was decided against the Benû Hilâl, the deed of Mâdir being looked upon as the more shameful. Compare the proverb, "More sordid than Mâdir;" Arab. Prov. I. 190. An idea of the vauntings that were poured forth on these occasions may be formed from the Mo'allaḳah of Amr ibn Kulthûm, who celebrates the exploits and virtues of his branch of the race of Taghlib. In the mouth of Abû Zayd, it simply means family pride, and what we should call keeping up a character.

A well-filled house: a house filled with the *hum* of visitors. The word is originally applied to a wooded place, in which the wind whispers through the trees, or to a place full of grass in which grasshoppers and flies make a noise. غنّ is defined to be the making a sound in the nose, *i.e.* humming.

And rebel against the adviser.—Imr al Ḳays says, "See, I have oft repelled the obstinate censurer concerning thee; him that is sincere in his blaming, not remiss." Mo'allaḳah, v. 43.

Comes by thee.—سنح is applied to an animal which turns its right side to the spectator, passing by him from his left to his right hand. The contrary is برح. The former was esteemed lucky, probably because the animal passing in that manner was more easy to shoot. But some Arabs considered the بارح lucky, and there was a difference of belief in this matter between Ḥijâz and Nejd. See Lane, Book I., p. 182.

From what thicket is thy root: what is thy origin and tribe? There may possibly be an allusion in the word اعياص to the five A'yâṣ of Ḳoraysh; these were five sons of 'Abd Shems, who had all similar names, so that the question might be understood, "From which of the A'yâṣ is thy origin?"

Arabs and foreigners.—The word عجم is applied to foreign

nations generally, but more particularly, it would seem, to the Persians. The idea connected with it is that of not speaking Arabic correctly. The phrase *ʿAjam and ʿArab* occurs in the verses which Abû Adîneh (or Odayneh) addressed to his cousin Al Aswad son of Munthir, king of Hira, urging him to put to death the captives he had made from Ghassân. They are given by Schultens, *Monumenta Vetustiora Arabiæ*, ed. 1740, p. 57. These verses were very celebrated, and were probably in the mind of Ḥarîri.

Like meat on the tray.—An ancient proverbial expression, signifying the being vile and worthless, or exposed to contempt. The proverb, "Women are like meat on the tray," is derived from a saying of the Khalif ʿOmar, quoted at Arab. Prov. I. 21, and means that they are worthless creatures and soil men's reputations.

The tavern of a liquor-seller.—The word حانة is thought by some to be derived from the Persian خانه, but the more reasonable opinion is that it is another form of حانوت, חָנוּת, חֲנוּתָא, the shop or vault of a vintner. At Jeremiah xxxvii. 16, where, in the English version, we read "When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon and into the cabins," the meaning of the word is no doubt underground vaults or cells, and the name must have been afterwards applied to the cellars where vintners kept and sold their wine. حانوت is the shop of a vintner, and also the vintner himself; it is also used for any shop. The derivation from حين, because it destroys men's property and wounds their honour is, of course, only the guess of a grammarian.

The white camels: camels of a white colour lightly mixed with yellow.

The last darkness of night.—تغليس is the setting forth on the journey after the تعريس or halt which is made in the later part of the night. It takes place either before dawn, or between the first dawn and the rising of the sun.

Left together those two old ones, i.e. *left the way or space free between them;* meaning, *left the two free, each to do to the*

other as he pleased (Lane). We left Abû Zayd and the Devil alone together.

Iblîs.—The Moslem name for the Devil, probably a corruption of *diabolos*, though said to be from ابلَس, because he despairs of the mercy of God; his former name, before his impiety, having been عزازيل. It is also said to have been Al Ḥârith, and the first child of Eve was named ʿAbd al Ḥârith, in honour of him: *Ṭabari*. According to Koran ii. 28, he was of the number of the angels, and sinned by refusing to bow down to Adam when he was created. God had created the angels to inhabit heaven, and then purposed the creation of man upon earth. He said to the angels, "I am about to place a vicar, خليفة, in the earth." They said to him, "Wilt thou place in it one who will work violence in it, and shed blood?" He said, "I know what ye know not." Having created Adam, God told him the names of all things, and then brought him to the angels, and bade them name them if they could. When they were unable to do this, God bade Adam tell the names, and when Adam had done so, God bade the angels bow down to him. God did this as a trial of their faith, not intending that they should commit idolatry by worshipping Adam, but making Adam the قِبلة, or point to which the prostration should be directed, the worship being received by God himself. All obeyed except Iblîs, who, according to repeated narratives of the event in the Koran, refused on the ground that he was made of fire, while Adam was only made of earth. He then appears to have been ejected from heaven, and to have become the enemy of man, whom he caused to be banished from Paradise. A difficult question in connection with Iblîs is his relation to the Jinn. At Koran xviii. 48, it is said, "We said to the angels, 'Bow down before Adam;' and they all bowed down except Iblîs, and he was of the Jinn. . . . Will ye take Iblîs and his progeny as patrons, instead of me? They are your enemies." From this it would appear that Iblîs belonged at once to the angels and the Jinn, though the Jinn are held to be a subordinate and a very different race of beings, for the angels dwell in heaven, have

no distinction of sex, and do not propagate their species; while the Jinn, or at least some kinds of them, as the سعالى, the غيلان, and the قطارب, are both male and female, and engender. Jinn are also both good and bad, and will be judged at the last day. Some will go to hell, like men, Koran xi. 120, and some will be rewarded. There are also Jinn who are Moslems, and others who are infidels, for Khorâfeh, who was carried away by Jinn, related, when he returned, that there had been a war between the Jinn of the two religions. Moreover, we learn from Koran xlvi. 28, that God assembled a number of Jinn to hear the Koran read, and that then they returned as apostles to their race. Also in the Seventy-second Sura, called *The Jinn*, it is revealed that a number of them having listened to the Koran, believed in it, and at once renounced idolatry. On the other hand there are some that are of an essentially wicked nature, and resemble the شياطين. Such was the *'Ifrît of the Jinn* (interpreted by Baydâwi as one *abominable* and *rebellious* among the Jinn), who offered to bring to Solomon the throne of the Queen of Sheba, Koran xxvii. 39. From this difference of nature it is difficult to understand that Iblîs was of the Jinn; for though it is held that the Jinn, or, at least, those of them essentially wicked in their nature, are descended from Iblîs, who propagated them in a miraculous manner, yet he must have been himself originally of a different nature. Baydâwi, at Koran ii. 32, treats this question at length, and gives various opinions, one of which is that Iblîs, though an angel by nature, became of the Jinn by act, that is, adopted their character, which seems to be the prevalent opinion, though the high authority of Ibn 'Abbâs is given for the opinion that there was an order of angels which begat children, and was called Jinn, to which order Iblîs belonged. He, like other devils, is cast at with fiery darts, according to the curse pronounced upon him by God: Koran xxxviii. 78. It is said that ابليس is a foreign word, and that for this reason, and also because it is a proper name, it is imperfectly declined.

THE THIRTEENTH ASSEMBLY.

The banks of the Zowrâ.—Zowrâ is a name applied to the Tigris in the neighbourhood of Bagdad, and to the city itself, or the eastern part of it. The general name for the Tigris is دجلة, the חִדֶּקֶל of Genesis ii. 14 and Daniel x. 4; חד being prefixed to signify the velocity of the current. *Gesenius.*

Trotted.—With regard to a horse it is defined as *rose in his running.*

Some children.—Plural of paucity.

That are kept jealously.—عقيلة is the most noble and precious part of anything. Compare Ṭarafeh, Mo'allakah, v. 66,—

"If death selects noble spirits, it also chooses and takes away the most precious of the miser's hoardings."

The word is also used of a she-camel, at v. 89.

The Heart, i.e., the centre or head-quarters of the army. An army had five divisions مقدّمة, ساقة, ميمنة, ميسرة, and قلب.

The Arms.—عضد is used of the upper arm between the elbow and shoulder. By a natural transition it came to signify a *helper.* The genius of the Arabic language, like that of the Hebrew, is to form new ideas by giving a metaphorical signification to material objects, and this character is strongly marked throughout the present passage.

The Limbs.—جوارح are the members or limbs of a man by which gain is made, as the hand, the foot, and the eye.

Turned about till back was belly.—This phrase answers to our *topsy-turvy*, and denotes confusion; but it is also said, he examined the matter "back and belly," that is, thoroughly. Arab. Prov. II. 243.

Front-tooth nor eye-tooth.—ثنيّة signifies one of the front teeth; that is, one of the central incisors, four in number. As the feminine of ثنيّ it signifies the she-camel that has shed the tooth called ثنيّة, that is, a camel in the sixth year. The name is also applied to a horse in the fourth, or as is otherwise said, in

the third year; and to a sheep or goat, or an animal of the bovine kind in the third year (Lane). Similarly ناب signifies the canine tooth, and also an aged camel in which this tooth is conspicuous.

Tarnished.—ازور is explained in De Sacy's commentary, as falling away and being reft from the possessor. But it is evident that the series of words are all intended to express the idea of colour. I have therefore translated as above. ازور has properly the signification of being discordant and confused in colour.

The Yellow loved one.—Compare the Assembly of the Denar.

My blue-eyed enemy.—This is usually explained to refer to the Greeks, who were the enemies of the Arabs, and a light-eyed race. Thus also صُهب السبال, *having red moustaches*, had the meaning of hostile, as being a mark of the Greeks. It may be that as the Byzantine Court had men of the northern nations in its service, so blue or light eyes, and red or yellow hair, might be found opposed to the Arabs in the field. See further a note on the Tenth Assembly. At Koran xx., 102, where it is said, "When the trumpet shall be sounded, and we shall gather together the wicked زُرْقًا," Baydâwi says that the wicked are thus described because this is the most hateful colour of the eye to the Arabs, since the Greeks were distinguished by it; and men in describing an enemy said, "Black of heart, ruddy of moustache, blue of eye." But it may also be rendered "staring," or rather "blear-eyed" with terror. It appears also to describe a light, wild, glittering eye, in contradistinction to the soft and languid black which the Arabs admired. Compare Arab. Prov. II. 848, and I. 715. It seems to have been connected with the idea of a piercing sight in the legend of 'Anz al Yemâmeh, commonly called Zarḳâ 'l Yemâmeh, the first woman who used koḥl. She was a woman of the primeval tribe of Jedîs, and when Jedîs had destroyed the tribe of Ṭasm, all but Ribâḥ ibn Murrah, this solitary survivor fled to Ḥassân ibn Tobba', king of Yemen, and sought vengeance on Jedîs. The Ḥimyarite army set forth, and, in order that its numbers might be concealed from Jedîs, the king commanded that each soldier should cut down the bough of a tree and bear

it before him. This is, perhaps, the original of the story in Macbeth. Zarḳâ ascended an أُطُم, a fortress or tower, and, though the army was three days' march distant, she saw it, and called out, "O people, either trees or Ḥimyar are coming against you." They would not believe her, and she then exclaimed, in the metre *rejez* :—

I swear by God that trees creep onward, or Ḥimyar bears something which he draws along.

She then described that she saw a man mending his sandal. The tribe still disbelieved, and in the end were surprised and destroyed. The legend is told in various ways: compare proverb "More keen-sighted than Zarḳa 'l Yemâmeh;" Ar. Prov. I. 192; also De Sacy's Ḥarîri, commentary to Fiftieth Assembly. For another instance of her keenness of sight see the ḳaṣîdeh of Nâbighah the Thobyâni, in De Sacy's *Chrestomathie*. Queen Zebbâ and Basûs are also described by the Arabs as blue-eyed.

Red death.—By *red* death, death in war is said to be meant. Arab. Prov. II. 670. White death is a natural and quiet death, with forgiveness of sins; and black death is a violent and dreadful death, as by strangling. It is to be noticed that in this address Ḥarîri abandons rhyme; the parts of the body, and the series of the form افعلّ, giving enough of rhythm to the composition. Compare Forty-ninth Assembly, where names compounded of Abû are introduced.

Their look is a sufficient examining.—"The eye of the horse is as good as a look in his mouth," is a proverb used of any one whose aspect plainly shows his real condition. In the Thirty-third Assembly, Abû Zayd says, "To you who are clear-sighted the looking on me suffices for a description."

A mess.—ثَرِيدٌ is a mess of crumbled bread, moistened with broth, and generally having small pieces of meat cut up in it,—a mess resembling *pillaw*, but made with bread instead of rice. In the thirteenth Assembly of Naṣîf al Yazaji are some verses recording the principal dishes of the Arabs; and in the commentary to these it is said that *tharîd* is made of meat, milk, and

bread. Hâshim, the ancestor of Mohammed, received that name because he *crumbled* the bread for the *tharîd* of the pilgrims; that is, because he was the first to distribute to them necessary provisions. When prepared luxuriously with eggs and marrow, as was the *tharîd* of Ghassân, it was the food of the wealthy, and esteemed above every other. It is said of ʿÂyisheh that she excelled all other women, as *tharîd* excels other kinds of food. The word غَوط is given as synonymous with *tharîd*.

The soul that dwells in me.—For a similar use of قرون compare the Thirty-fourth Assembly.

Sets a mote. — The figure of a mote in the eye is used commonly to express any trouble or humiliation. In the Twenty-second Assembly it is said of a company who are convicted of behaving ungenerously, "Each one drooped his eyelid over his mote." So also in the Thirty-seventh, "The noble-minded man, if his eye have caught a mote, conceals it even from the pupils of his own eyes." The metaphor is ancient, for in the Moʿallaḳah of Ḥârith it is said, "If ye will be silent we will be as those who close the eye when the motes are under their eyelids." Line 32.

Among thy Reciters.—In the early days of Arab poetry, when writing was almost unknown, the reputation of a poet depended on the number of persons whom his genius induced to commit his poems to memory, and to recite them in public gatherings, or in the houses of great men. Such a reciter was called راوى; and many stories are current of the marvellous powers of memory displayed. In these Assemblies Ḥârith is supposed to be the Râwi of Abû Zayd, as is stated by Ḥarîri in the Preface. Sometimes a poet was the Râwi of another; the last who was so is said to have been Kothayyir Ṣâḥib ʿAzza, or "the Lover of ʿAzza," who died in the year of the Hijra 105. His life is given by Ibn Khallikân. One of the most celebrated of these reciters was Abû 'l Ḳâsim Ḥammâd, who flourished at the close of the first and the beginning of the second century, and was in high favour with Welîd ibn ʿAbd al Melik and Hishâm. He was called Ar Râwiah الراوية, for the multiplicity of his knowledge of

Ex & 67.

Arab poetry, anecdotes, and traditions. Ibn Khallikân gives a life of him, and speaks of his wonderful powers. He is said to have first collected the Seven Mo'allakât, which probably owe to him their present form. Ibn Khallikân relates that the Khalifs of the House of Omayyeh treated him with much distinction, and tells of him the anecdote which will be found in my Introduction. In the Durrah of Harîri (Anthologie Gram. Arabe) is the story of his being sent for from Irak to Syria by the Khalif Hishâm to inform him of the origin of a verse of an ancient poet. Hammâd was famous for his knowledge of the *Days*, or battles and adventures of the desert Arabs, and all that related to their history, poetry, genealogy, and idioms; but in the Arabic language he was not very skilful, for having learnt the Koran by heart from a written copy, he mistook the pronunciation of three hundred حروف or words which may be variously pronounced. As manuscripts increased the profession of Râwi declined, but it still continued one of the chief accomplishments of the learned to know by heart vast quantities of verse. There is a play on the verb روى, which I have passed over in the translation.

I complain to God.—The metre of these lines is سريع, which has been explained in the notes to the Second Assembly. This and other similar Arab lamentations seem to have been suggested by the beautiful lines attributed to 'Amr ibn Al Ḥârith ibn Al Moḍâḍ, prince of the Jorhom, at the expulsion of his family from Mecca. Schultens, *Monumenta Vetustiora Arabiæ*, p. 1. I may say that I totally disbelieve in the great antiquity of these or any other extant Arabic verses.

In the ashy year.—A year of drought and barrenness, when all vegetation is dried up to the appearance of ashes.

Choking hinders me.—The full proverb is, "Choking hinders the verse," *i.e.*, "stops the way of the verse." In Arab. Prov. I. 340, two explanations of this proverb are given. One is that a father forbad a poetical son to recite, until the youth saddened, and fell into an illness. The father then relented, but it was too late, and the son, in his last moments, uttered the words of the

proverb. The more popular tradition ascribes the words to the poet 'Obayd ibn Al Abraṣ. The King of Hira, Munthir ibn Mâ' as Semâ, had, in a fit of drunkenness, ordered his two boon-companions, named Khâlid and 'Amr to be buried alive. When he returned to his senses he was filled with grief, and constructed two mausoleums over his friends, at which he determined to spend two days in mourning every year. He further made a vow that one day should be called the Day of Good, and the other the Day of Evil. The first person whom he should meet on the Day of Good he would present with a hundred camels, and the first he should meet on the Day of Evil he would put to death. Ill fate brought one year to the spot the poet 'Obayd, on the morning of the Day of Evil. Munthir told him that he must die, but bade him first repeat his poem, beginning "Malḥûb has gone desertward from his people; he is gone to the open plain, and returns not,"—a poem which Munthir much admired. 'Obayd answered, "The choke stops the verse," a phrase which became proverbial. The poet then desired to have wine to enliven him before death, and when he had well drunk his veins were opened, and the two tombs washed with his blood. This horrible act is attributed to various kings of Hira, and, in the Commentary of De Sacy, to Nó'mân, son of Munthir. The most trustworthy narrative, however, is that of the Kitâb al Aghâni, which has been translated by M. Caussin de Perceval, Essai, II. 105, and to it the reader may be referred. For proverbial expressions connected with the legend, see Ar. Prov. I. 25, 185, 499. In the commentary on the proverb "To-morrow he will be near to him who looks for him," I. 118, it is said that this kind of human sacrifice was abrogated by Nó'mân ibn al Munthir, who was converted to Christianity by the virtue and devotion of a Christian Arab. The tale is identical with that of Damon and Pythias. On the proverb "The wolf is bye-named Abû Ja'deh," see De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 662.

The forelocks shall bow down.—God is called the *Master of thy forelock*, in the First Assembly. In Koran xi. 59, it is said "There is no creature but he holds it by the forelock," and

in lv. 41, "The wicked shall be known by their mark; they shall be taken by the forelocks and the feet." These expressions may owe their origin to the usage of the Arabs, who gloried in possessing the forelocks of their enemies, as an American Indian glories in his scalps. They were said to cut off the hair of prisoners before they released them, and to carry it home in their quivers, as a token of their own victory and the abasement of their adversaries. See the proverb, "More unlucky than Khowta'ah." Arab. Prov. I. 687. In the life of Imr al Ḳays, from the Kitâb al Aghâni, it is said that when Hojr, the father of the poet, was slain, he bade that his arms, camels, and goods should be given to the one of his sons who did not afflict himself at his death. The messenger came to Nâfi', the eldest, and told him what had happened, on which Nâfi' threw dust on his head. The messenger came then to another, who did likewise; and so he came to all, and found none who did not afflict himself. At last he came to Imr al Ḳays, the youngest, whom he found drinking and playing with a friend at نرد (probably dice). The messenger said, "Hojr is dead," but Imr al Ḳays said to his friend, "Play on;" and they played till the game was over. Imr al Ḳays then inquired the cause of his father's death, and, having been told, exclaimed, "Wine and women are forbidden to me, till I have slain a hundred of the Benû Asad, and cut off the forelocks of a hundred."

The faces of the assemblage shall be black and white.—God has said that in the day of judgment there shall be faces white and black; that is, the faces of the believers shall be lighted with joy, and those of the infidels black with despair. Koran iii. 102.

Cleft our hearts in pieces.—Compare commentary on Mo'allaḳah of Imr al Ḳays, v. 22.

A-stretch.—اشرأبّ signifies to stretch out the neck as one does when about to drink water at a stream, and then to stretch forth the neck in expectation of anything. The word answers to our "a-tip-toe."

Her cloak.—The جلباب is a woman's wide outer garment, enveloping her whole body.

Oh! would I knew.—The metre of these lines is مجتث, which has been explained in the notes to the First Assembly.

One mind by vinegar and another by wine,—i.e., each mind in one way or another.—Compare Arab. Prov. II. 628, and Ḥamâseh 558, Arab. Text. It may also mean "with good or bad," since the Arabs of the desert figured these two qualities by wine and by vinegar, which is the corruption of wine.

Being at one time Ṣakhr, at another time the sister of Ṣakhr.—The most celebrated female name in Arab poetry is that of Al Khansâ, the sister of the warriors Ṣakhr and Mu'âwiyeh, and famous for her elegies on the two brothers. Her name was Tumâḍir, and she was the daughter of 'Amr, son of Hârith, son of Sherîd . . . . . son of Sulaym. The name Khansâ, (having a turned-up nose like the gazelle or the wild cow), was given her, as some say, by Durayd ibn As Ṣimmah, her rejected lover. Mu'âwiyeh and Ṣakhr, her brothers, were two of the chief men of the tribe of Sulaym. In their childhood their father 'Amr had shown them to the assembled Arabs at the fair of 'Okâẓ, and proclaimed them, amid the assent of all, to be the two noblest boys of the posterity of Moḍar. Years after, Mu'âwiyeh had met at 'Okâẓ a certain Hâshim son of Ḥarmalah, of the tribe of Murrah of Ghaṭafân; and a quarrel had arisen between them. When the sacred truce was at an end, Mu'âwiyeh determined to attack the Benû Murrah. A battle was fought which is known in tradition as the first Day of Howrâ, and Mu'âwiyeh was killed by Durayd, brother of Hâshim. Hâshim himself was thought to have been killed, as he had been unhorsed and his mare had galloped into the ranks of the Benû Sulaym; but Ṣakhr having during the ensuing sacred month of Rejeb gone among the Benû Murrah, discovered that he was still alive, and was informed that he and Durayd had killed Mu'âwiyeh. "Have ye buried him?" asked Ṣakhr. "Yes," said the brothers, and in costly stuff of Yemen, which was purchased for five-and-twenty young

camels." "Show me his tomb," said Ṣakhr. When he was conducted to it he wept, so as to excite the scorn of the Arabs, who held it not good that a hero should show signs of sorrow. "I weep thus every night," said Ṣakhr, "and know no repose since Mu'âwiyeh is dead." This passionate affection for each other distinguished the family. Khansâ bewailed her brother in elegies, and Ṣakhr prepared to avenge him. When the sacred month was over he penetrated into the camp of the sons of Murrah, slew Durayd, and then escaped by the fleetness of his mare, which was that which had formerly belonged to Hâshim. Some of Durayd's kindred pursued, but were repulsed by the Benû Sulaym. This is called the second Day of Ḥowrâ. In the *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Poesie der alten Araber*, of Theodor Nöldeke, some verses are to be found composed by Al Khansâ on the death of Mu'âwiyeh. They have all the spirit of ante-Islamic poetry; and, as far as can be judged from such fragments, justify her high reputation. These events took place about ten years before the Hijra, at the time when Moḥammed had just entered on his religious career. Ṣakhr did not long survive his brother. Being at feud with the Benû Asad ibn Khozaymeh he made an incursion upon them, and carried away a number of their camels. The Benû Asad pursued and came up with the spoilers at a place called Thât al Athl. The combat which took place is called the Day of Thât al Athl. The companions of Ṣakhr fled from him, and he was wounded by a lance which drove a ring of his breast mail into his body. He regained his people, but sickened, and lay long helpless; for though the wound seemed to heal, yet the place swelled, and there grew out a thing like a wen upon it. Now Ṣakhr had a wife named Bathîleh or Sulayma, whom he had carried off by force from the Benû Asad; and one day he overheard a woman ask her how was her husband. She replied bitterly, "He is neither a living man to be hoped in, nor a dead one to be forgotten." Then Ṣakhr knew that she was weary of him. But when they asked his mother, he heard her say, "Hope with me, he will recover." Then he improvised these verses:—

The mother of Ṣakhr is not weary in her attendance; but Sulayma is weary of my bed and my seat;
Whosoever esteems a wife as a mother, let him not live but in misery and scorn.

Then, resolved to linger no longer, he bade them cut out the ring, which they did, and he shortly afterwards died.

It was on Ṣakhr that the principal elegies of Al Khansâ were composed. Her Dîwân is still extant, but only in manuscript. Fragments of it may be found at p. 516 of De Sacy's Ḥarîri, and in Nöldeke's *Beiträge*. The courage, generosity, and hospitality of the warrior are praised in impassioned verse. "With one hand he was strong to smite, with the other free to bestow." When the lance-points crossed he handed round the cup of death, he was a defence when his people were dismayed. Who now is there to entertain guests when the north-wind blows, while the echo replies, and the cold forces the camels to seek the pens? Thus lamented Al Khansâ for many years; so as, at last, to incur the reproaches of those who thought her grief too long-lived. In the eighth year of the Hijra the Benû Sulaym made their submission to the Prophet, and joined his forces to the number of a thousand warriors, at the head of whom was 'Abbâs ibn Merdâs, the son of Khansâ. She came with her son, and was received with great respect by Moḥammed, to whom she recited her poetry. It now remains to give some account of the personal history of this heroine. Though her poetry was elegiac, she was, if the Arabs are to be believed, proud and masculine in temper, and with little delicacy, even if judged by the standard of her own primitive age. At the fair of 'Okâẓ, the poet An Nâbighat ath Thobyâni erected for her a red leather tent in token of honour; and in the contest of poetry gave her the highest place, above all but Al A'sha (Maymûn al A'sha the Great, son of Ḳays). "If I had not heard him," said Nâbighah to her, "I would say that thou didst surpass every one in poetry. *Verum confiteor te omnes mamillis præditas (scilicet fœminas) superare.*" Cui illa superbissimè, "*Nec minus omnes testiculis præditos.*" She was first married to Rawâḥat ibn 'Âbd al 'Azîz of her own tribe of Sulaym, and afterwards to Merdâs

ibn 'Âmir of the same tribe. She was probably a widow for the second time when she attracted the admiration of Durayd ibn Aṣ Ṣimmah, one of the most celebrated heroes and poets of the time, and held by the Arabs to be the equal of 'Antarah in genius and knightly prowess. But he was about sixty years old when he beheld the young poetess in a light undress applying pitch to the sores of her camels. He fell in love with her at once, and sang—

Greet ye Tumâḍir, O my companions; halt here and dwell; your halting here is all I seek.
I have ne'er seen or heard till to day that one anointing scabby camels
In common garb should be beautiful, putting the pitch on the sore places;
With bare arms smearing the pitch, as the perfume is smeared on a striped vest of Yemen.

Khansâ, however, was not inclined to wed him, and refused him, after ascertaining, by an indelicate expedient, that he had lost the strength of youth. Caussin de Perceval, Essai, II. 549. In her later years, after the establishment of Islam, she knew 'Omar and 'Âyisheh, who rebuked her for persisting in her grief for Ṣakhr. From an anecdote told of her behaviour at her daughter's marriage in Hammer-Purgstall's life of her (Vol. I., p. 550) she appears to have been of an imperious and unamiable character when advanced in years. It may be noticed that the words of Durayd, "putting the pitch on the sore places," became proverbial to express the putting of anything in the right place, or making an apposite observation: compare Thirty-eighth Assembly, near the beginning.

In the commentary to the proverb "The wild ass is stopped in his rush" the full legend of Ṣakhr and his wife is given. It is there said, "Alii referunt virum quendam uxorem Sachri, quæ e marito tædium cepisset, interrogâsse *Num podex venditur?* (erat enim pulchra et magnis coxis prædita mulier) eamque respondisse *Certè! brevi tempore,*" by which she meant that she was only waiting for her husband's death to marry again. When Ṣakhr heard these words he swore that he would kill her; and when she entered he said, "Give me my sword." She gave

it to him, and he tried to strike her with it, but his strength failed him. He then recited the verses of which the first two have been translated above. In these verses occurs the phrase "The wild ass is stopped in his rush" or "leap," which became proverbial. Arab. Prov. II. 251. In the Forty-fifth Assembly Ḥariri makes Al Khansâ proverbial for contentious eloquence. The judge says to Abû Zayd's wife, "If Al Khansâ were to dispute with thee she would be silenced." Some eulogistic words on Ṣakhr are given at Arab. Prov. I. 31. Some verses by Ṣakhr are to be found at Ḥamâseh, p. 489.

THE FOURTEENTH ASSEMBLY.

The City of Peace.—According to Sherîshi, Al Manṣûr called Bagdad the City of Peace, because the Dijleh (the Tigris), had been previously called the Valley and River of Peace. In the commentary on the Thirteenth Assembly he gives the varieties of the name as بغداذ and بغذاذ, and بغذان, and بغدان, and بغدام, and بغداذ, and بغذاذ. Maghdad is also a form, the letters B and M being easily interchanged in pronunciation, as Mecca, Becca: Koran iii. 90. It is said of Al Aṣma'î, that he always spoke of the City of Peace, because it was said in a Tradition that in Persian *Bagh* is an idol and *Dâd* is a gift, which made an impious or ill-omened name. Gibbon notices that the Byzantines adopted the name Eirenopolis.

The pilgrimage of Islam.—This is the *ḥajj* which every Moslem ought to perform once in his life, in one of the three months Shawwâl, Thû 'l Ḳa'dah, or Thû 'l Ḥijjah, the three last months of the Arabian calendar. It is distinguished from the عُمرة, or mere visit to the holy places, which is optional though meritorious. The command on the subject is given decisively, Koran ii. 192, *et seqq*, and xxii. 27. The orthodox teachers are not unanimous about the exact days of the three months. Ash Shâfi'î prescribes the two former months with nine days of Thû 'l

Ḥijjah, while Abû Ḥanîfeh allows ten days, and Mâlik the whole of this last month. But it is in all cases necessary that the pilgrim should be present at a *khoṭbah*, which is recited on Mount 'Arafât, on the afternoon of the 9th of the month Thû 'l Ḥijjah. It is useless to attempt to describe here the multifarious ceremonies of the *ḥajj*. A sufficient account of them will be found in Freytag's *Einleitung*, p. 418. It is called the Pilgrimage of Islam, because it is one of the pillars of the religion. Said the Prophet, "Islam is founded on five things, and the Pilgrimage is one of them." The five are, according to Al Ghazzâli, (Pocock, Specimen, p. 294): The confession that there is no God but God, and that Moḥammed is the Apostle of God; Prayer; Alms; Pilgrimage; and the Fast of Ramaḍân. But another opinion is that not the *Shahâdeh* or Confession, but Ablution is the first of these five; for the Prophet meant by the foundations of Islam the things the practice of which keeps men faithful to it, and not the Confession, which is the religion itself.

Fulfilled my squalor.—تفث is the state of being dirty, and with matted hair, as one is while on the pilgrimage during the time that it is forbidden to shave the head or *pubes*, استحداد, to pare the nails, to clip the moustache, and to pluck out the hair of the arm-pits, all which things are unlawful during the state called *iḥrâm*. When the pilgrims have arrived at the spot where they assemble before entering the sacred territory, each changes his clothes for the pilgrim's garment called *ḥarîm*, or vulgarly *iḥrâm*, or *ḥirâm*. "This garment," says Mr. Lane, in his Modern Egyptians, ch. iii., "consists generally of two simple pieces of cotton, or linen, or woollen cloth, without seam or ornament, one of which is wrapped round the loins, and the other thrown over the shoulders; the instep and heel of each foot and the head must be bare; sandals, however, are allowed." From this time until the visit to Mount 'Arafât, which follows the ceremonies in Mecca, the prohibitions mentioned above are enforced. Furthermore, it is unlawful to hunt any animal for food, during the state of *iḥrâm*, though fishing صيد البحر, is allowed for subsistence. For the interpretation of

these ordinances, see Baydâwi, Koran v. 1, *et seqq.*, also 95 *et seqq.* When all the rites of the *ḥajj* have been performed, the pilgrim quits the state of *iḥrâm*. The doing so is called إحلال, and then the head is shaved, the nails pared, and so on, and the pilgrim is allowed the use of perfumes, and may return to sexual intercourse.

The definition of تفث given above is admissible, but as to the precise signification of the word there are different opinions. It occurs at Koran xxii. 30, where it is said ثمّ ليقضوا تفثهم, which Baydâwi interprets, *let them put an end to their filthiness*, but whether the word تفث express the state of filth, or the action of doing away with it by the shaving, etc., is uncertain, since the latter would agree as well with the meaning of the verb. According to some authorities, تفث signifies the performance of the ceremonies of the *ḥajj*, so that the meaning of the words of the Koran would be, "when ye have performed your ceremonies." The notion of impurity is attached to the Hebrew תֹּפֶת, Job xvii. 6; the name Tophet, in *Sept.* *Ταφέθ*, was applied to a place in the valley of the children of Hinnom which was impure with the blood of the human sacrifices to Moloch, 2 Kings xxiii. 10; Jerem. xix. It is, I think, even possible that Moḥammed took this, like so many other words, from the Jews, and meant, "let them perform their Tophet," *i.e.* "their great slaughter of sacrifices." The reason of this ambiguity is that the word is unknown except from the Koran. For abundant information on the *ḥajj*, see the Traditions of Al Bokhâri, vol. I.

Indulgence.—Verbo رفث coitum significant, aut obscenum sermonem quo ad coitum invitatur.

Khayf.—The Khayf, or slope of Mina. Compare Tenth Assembly, "Those that the slope of Mina gathers."

A leather tent.—Such is the signification of طراف. Naṣîf al Yazaji, in his thirteenth Assembly, has united the names of habitations among the ancient Arabs in some verses. It is there said that the خبآ is of wool; the نجاد of camel's or goat's hair; the قشع of skins; the سُترة of dry mud; the خيمة of cotton

cloth; the فسطاط of شعر, that is of horse hair, or other hair than وبر; the قُبّة of brick; the خظيرة of trees; the طراف of leather.

The furnace.—For another signification of وطيس see Arab. Prov. II. 263. The term seems to apply either to a large stone with a hole in it, in which meat was put to be baked by a fire made round the hole; or to stones which were made hot and then put into water to boil it. When the Arabs had no kettle they put water into a skin and boiled it in this manner.

The chameleon.—حرباء signifies the male chameleon, which follows the sun with its eye all day. It is said proverbially, *Colder than the eye of the chameleon*, because he loves to gaze on the sun, Arab. Prov. I. 743. When the sun is very hot he becomes active and moves about in his hole. Ḥamâseh, p. 808, Arab. Text. In the commentary to this passage it is said that when young he is ash-coloured, that afterwards he becomes yellow, and that when the sun is hot on him he turns green.

What art thou? instead of Who art thou? signifies that the speaker has no conception concerning the person about whom he asks. Thus Pharaoh said, "What is the Lord of the world?" Koran xxvi. 22.

The fragrant waving of your myrtle.—تضوّع expresses the spreading of an odour by the moving or shaking of anything. Thus Imr al Ḳays (Mo'allaḳah v. 8) "When they (his two mistresses) stood up, the musk odour was diffused from them like an air of the east breeze which brings the perfume of the pink." Compare also his Dîwân, p. 35, line 11. The tree called رند is described as fragrant and growing in the desert. Al Aṣma'î denies that it is the myrtle.

The elder, the elder.—The repetition is for emphasis, and stands in place of the verb, which though only understood still makes the two nouns *manṣûb*, as though it were said, "Let the elder precede." If there be repetition the verb must be left unexpressed, but if there be no repetition, the expression of it is lawful. Compare Fourth Assembly, "Haste, haste!" Analogously in English one may say "Haste, haste!" or "Make haste!" but not "Make haste, haste!"

Loosed from the foot-rope.—A proverbial expression. Arab. Prov. II. 309. It is the rope with which the Arabs when they halt tie up one of the fore-feet of the camel to the part above the knee so that he stands on three legs. The meaning of نشط is *he tied in a bow*, or a knot that may easily be slipped, and the *hamzeh* is privative. The foot-rope was fastened thus that it might be slipped easily at the moment of starting. It is said of a man who does not suddenly change, and whose friendships are constant, "Thy foot-rope is not with a slip-knot." Arab. Prov. II. 621. The metre of these verses is *rejez*.

Whose beast has fallen.—Literally, "Who has been broken down with;" for the word camel or beast is not expressed. ابدعت الراحلة is said when the ridden camel stops in her pace from fatigue or lameness, as if doing a new or unaccustomed thing, and أبدع به is the ordinary phrase to express the losing a beast from fatigue and the having to go on foot during a journey. Sherîshi says that a man came to the Prophet and said, "Give me a mount; for أبدع بي." The construction is of course impersonal; or in the language of Arabic grammarians the *jârr* and *mejrûr* به are set in the place of the agent. Compare ليلة أسرى بي used by the Prophet in describing his miraculous journey.

My sighing, etc.—A kind of double meaning is probably intended here. It may be taken literally that he sighs as he mounts each hill and weeps as he enters each dale; but there is also an allusion to the *ascending* of sighs, and the flowing *down* of tears.

Your grist; your bounty.—The literal meaning is the corn with which the mill is fed.

Dwells in sanctuary, etc.—While you befriend and protect your neighbour, so that he lives secure, you allow him, through your generosity, to spoil and make use of your wealth. The allusion is to the sacred places and seasons of the old Arabs, and to the forays which they made on each other when not restrained by these obligations.

O ye Lords.—Metre *mujteth.*—It is useless to enlarge on the

precise nature of the viands mentioned in these verses. عصيدة is said to be flour made consistent by boiling; ثريدة has been already explained in the notes to the Thirteenth Assembly; and عجوة in the notes to the Sixth Assembly; نهيدة is a sauce for dates, made by boiling to a thick consistency the seeds of the colocynth. The laborious Naṣîf al Yazaji has introduced the names of many dishes of the ancient Arabs into his thirteenth Assembly. In asking for food at Mecca the boy may have relied on the prayer of Abraham for the dwellers or visitors at the Holy Place, which is a command to all the faithful, "Dispose towards them the hearts of men, and nourish them with earth's fruits; so may they give thanks." Koran xiv. 40.

Through me may reward be gotten.—It is a Tradition of ʿAbd Allah ibn ʿAmr ibn al ʿÂṣi, that the Prophet said, "Whoever gives his brother enough food to fill him and enough water to quench his thirst, God shall put seven moats between him and hell." This ʿAbd Allah was of Ḳoraysh, and was brought by his father who was a Muhâjir to Medina in early childhood. He handed down seven hundred Traditions. He was one of the four transmitters of Traditions of the same name in the first century, who were called the four ʿAbâdileh (Abdallahs); the others were ʿAbd Allah ibn Masʿûd, ʿAbd Allah ibn ʿAbbâs, and ʿAbd Allah ibn az Zobayr.

The waist-folds of the skirt.—The حُبكة is the part of the إزار (or waist wrapper) where it is tied round the waist, which part is folded or doubled. The ancient dress of the Arabs consisted of a بُرد or رداء, which were wrappers for the whole body, and an إزار, which was a wrapper fastened round the waist and hanging down to the ankles. The two together composed a حُلّة or dress. The *izâr* being only fastened above the hips might be pulled off or drop; thus it is related of Jebelet ibn al Ayham, the last king of Ghassân, who submitted to the Khalif ʿOmar and entered Islam in the 16th year of the Hijra, that he made the pilgrimage to Mecca clothed according to the command of the Prophet, with an *izâr*, and without *serâwîl* or drawers. A man of the Fezârah put his foot on the skirt of the king's *izâr*

and pulled it off, so that his nakedness was exposed. The quarrel that ensued ended in the flight of Jebeleh to Constantinople, and his return to the Christian religion. The نطاق is described as a kind of *izâr* worn by women, girt round the waist in such a manner that the upper part hangs down over the lower; the upper part descending to the knee, and the lower to the feet; it has حبك and is fastened by a تكة or band, which runs through the doubled upper part. The place or part of the *izâr* where it is fastened round the waist is also called حجر. On this subject see De Sacy's *Chrestomathie Arabe*, vol. II., p. 303, second edition. The phrase in the text is proverbial, and means "when they were girding themselves or preparing for departure."

The promise of ʿOrḳûb.—ʿOrḳûb was a man proverbial among the Arabs for breaking his promises. He is said by some to have been a Jew of Khaybar, by others to have been an inhabitant of Yathrib (either Medina or another Yathrib or Yatrib, near Hojr, in Yemâmeh), or lastly a man of Amalek. It is said proverbially, *More promise-breaking than ʿOrḳûb*: Arab. Prov. I. 454. It is related that a brother of his came to ask him for something. Said ʿOrḳûb, "When this palm-tree shoots the shoot is thine." When the shoot was out the brother came again, and ʿOrḳûb bade him wait until the fruit was in the state called بلح; that is, until the dates had formed, but were green and small. When this took place the brother came again; but ʿOrḳûb bade him wait until they were in the state called زهو, that is till the dates began to redden; then to wait until they were رطب, or freshly ripe; and then until they were تمر or fully ripe and turning to dryness, and therefore fit to cut. When they were in this state ʿOrḳûb went by night and cut them, and gave his brother nothing. For the names of dates in their various stages of growth, see Lane, under بسر and بلح; and also the Ḳâmûs cited in Freytag's Lexicon, under بسر. That ʿOrḳûb was held in early times to be a man of Yathrib (Medina) and of the Ows, appears from the tradition that the mention of him as a promise-breaker by Kaʿb ibn Zohayr in his Burdeh, v. 11, gave

offence as a slight to the Anṣâr. See note to Freytag's edition of the poem.

A need in the mind of Jacob.—This is an allusion to the history of Joseph. When the sons of Jacob went a second time into Egypt, taking with them Benjamin, their father commanded them not to enter at one gate, but at several. This is explained to mean that he feared on account of their beauty, and comeliness, and their celebrity in Egypt as enjoying the favour of the Governor, and thought that if they entered together they might be struck with the evil eye. They entered the city as their father commanded them, and though this could not have protected them against the will of God, *it satisfied a need or want that was in the mind of Jacob.* Koran xii. 67, 68.

Serûj is my dwelling.—These verses are also of the metre *mujteth.*

THE FIFTEENTH ASSEMBLY.

Black of Robe.—Ta'abbaṭa Sherran says of crossing the desert in a dark night, when the Ghûl was abroad :

A moonless night ; I pierced through its robe, as the full-breasted girl puts on her frock. De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 480.

Fantasies.—وسواس is the evil whispered suggestion of the mind, or of Satan, which comes in loneliness. The verb is applied to the temptations of Adam and Eve in Paradise, Koran vii. 19 ; xx. 118 ; and to the suggestions of a man's own mind, l. 15. Compare cxiv.

My night-dark night.—A similar expression occurs in the Fifth Assembly. The epithet is used of a dark, moonless night, such as precedes the new moon.

Enter ye into them with peace.—These are words from the Koran, Sura xv. 46. It will be said to those who are welcomed to the gardens and fountains of Paradise, "Enter ye into them with peace, free from fear." In l. 33, the pronoun refers to the same

substantives understood. For this reason the speaker keeps to the actual words of the Koran in addressing whoever knocked at the door. Compare the Forty-first Assembly, where Ḥârith addresses Abû Zayd, "Woe to thee; will ye bid others to piety, but forget to bid yourselves?" where he speaks in the plural, because these words so occur in a Tradition of Mohammed, who on the night of the *masra* saw persons who had their tongues and lips cut off with shears of fire, and who, when asked who they were, answered, "We were of those who bade others to piety, but forgot ourselves." De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 538.

Without the guess of doubt; or, rather, without guessing at the doubtful or hidden. This expression is taken from Koran xviii. 21, where it is applied to the vain guesses made by people as to the number of the Youths of the Cave, that is the Seven Sleepers.

I took to How? and Where?—I took to asking him of his health, and where he was dwelling.

Let me swallow down my spittle.—This is a most ancient phrase meaning, "Give me time to rest and collect myself." It is found in the book of Job, vii. 19, "How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?" When Ibn Surayj disputed with Abû Bekr Mohammed az Zâhiri, the latter said, "Give me time to swallow down my spittle." Ibn Surayj answered, "You might swallow the Tigris before you answer me." (Ibn Khallikân, life of Ibn Surayj.) This anecdote Hammer-Purgstall, in his life of Ibn Surayj, has curiously perverted.

O thou base-born.—The phrase لا ابا لك has given rise to much controversy. It may be interpreted, "Thou who art without a father," that is, who hast no known father, and art base-born," as the phrase لا امّ لك may be rendered, "thou who hast no mother, and art a foundling, picked up," or "who hast no free mother, and art a هجين;" or it may mean, "God curse, or cease to preserve, thy father!" But whatever its grammatical import, there can be no doubt that it is generally used playfully, and though in form an imprecation, or an insult, it ex-

presses fondness and intimacy, or even admiration, like قاتلك الله, "May God fight against thee!" or ثكلتك امّك, "May thy mother be bereft of thee!" which are used when a man does anything worthy of admiration, as the reciting of some fine verses. Similarly, it is said in praise of a good archer, لا عُدّ من نفره, "Let him not be counted among his people." — Anthologie Gram. Arabe. p. 41 Ar. Text, where a verse of Imr al Ḳays is quoted. The meaning of the first and third of these expressions may be, however, "He is so superior to every one that no one can fight against him, and God alone must fight against him;" and "Let him not be counted among his people, for he is far above them." But it is more reasonable to take them as a kind of complimentary imprecation, as an Englishman might say, "Confound the fellow, how clever he is!" An Arab of the desert was even heard to say to the Deity, in a year of drought, "Send down upon us rain, لا ابا لك." But Sulaymân ibn ʿAbd al Melik, who heard him, put the best construction upon his words, and considered them to mean, "Thou hast no father;" and that the Arab was merely testifying that God had no father, nor female companion, nor offspring." (Lane.) In the forty-seventh line of the Moʿallaḳah of Zohayr, the phrase is evidently a mere expletive. لا ابا لك is said to be for لا اباك, the ل being redundant. (See De Sacy's Ḥarîri p. 464.) On this point, however, refer to Lane's Lexicon.

I was evil in thought at his refraining.—When an Arab finds that his guest will not eat, he fears that he meditates some evil against him, and that he does not desire to bind himself by accepting hospitality. Thus when Abraham saw that the angels refused what he set before them he was afraid until they re-assured him. Koran xi. 73.

Brother of empty talk.—ترّهات are originally small ways, branching off the main road (Sherîshi); and the word must then have been applied to *wanderings* or *digressions* of talk, and so to vain and unprofitable speech.

Yesternight.—Ḥarîri, in the Durrah (Anthol. Gram. Arabe, p. 27, Texte Arabe), says that it is a mistake when one who in

the morning is speaking of the previous night calls it البارحة; for from the dawn to the time when the sun begins to decline he should say الليلة, and only during the latter part of the day, and during the succeeding night, should he say البارحة. It is related in a Tradition of the Prophet that when he had finished the morning prayer he said to the Companions, "Is there one of you who has seen a vision this night?" using the word ليلة. Compare "last night" and "yesternight" in English. The use in the text is correct, as the conversation takes place at night.

An ally of want.—حليف is one who unites in a confederacy with another. The word is applied to the confederacies of the tribes, as that between Asad and Ghaṭafân, and that between certain tribes of Ḳoraysh. It here means one who is a close companion of want.

Fulfilled its vow, i.e., "come to an end." It is said of a man, "he has fulfilled his vow," when he dies, as if death were incumbent upon him, as a thing vowed, and he fulfilled the vow by dying. The original of this expression is to be found at Koran xxxiii. 23, where it is explained as referring to those who have fought in the cause of Islam till they have met martyrdom, as Ḥamzah, and Muṣ'ab son of 'Omayr, and Anas son of An Naḍr. Others are spoken of in the same passage as "awaiting" their hour, as 'Othmân and Ṭalḥah. This Anas was the uncle of Anas ibn Mâlik, the transmitter of Traditions.

Sunrise.—Ḥarîri in the Durrah says that شرق is said of the sun only in the winter. Anthol. Gram. Arabe, p. 28.

Pass by.—From left to right, so as to give a good shot. The meaning is any one who might show himself a fit subject to be practised upon.

Cornelian.—This stone is recommended by the Prophet. 'Âyisheh and 'Ali relate that he said, "Seal with seals of cornelian."

The yellow gold.—إبريز is apparently the Greek ὄβρυζον.

More bewildered than a lizard.—This is proverbial; it is said that the lizard when he wanders away from the stone under which he lives cannot find his way back.

Chid me on.—As the camel driver chides or urges on his camels by singing to them.

A driblet from my watering.—This is proverbial, like برض من عِدّ, signifying little from, or instead of, much. A similar expression occurs in Forty-fourth Assembly; بالنشح عند المورد

All the length of that day.—Literally, all the *cloud* of that day, like the *shadow* of that day: compare Thirty-second Assembly, "who resolved to pass the shadow of that day."

To let down my bucket into rivers.—To ask charity in many places, or to endeavour to gain money. In the Forty-ninth Assembly Abû Zayd tells his son, "Cast thy bucket into every cistern," meaning, "get gain wherever thou canst." "Let down thy bucket among the buckets" (compare Seventeenth Assembly), was a proverbial expression, meaning, "come and labour and take thy chance with the rest;" derived from the watering of travellers at a well, when each man let down the bucket and drew for himself. Arab. Prov. II. 436.

With burning stomach.—Literally, liver. It is said in a Tradition, "For every dried up liver there is a recompense;" meaning, "For the giving of drink to whoever is parched with intense thirst there is a recompense." From this Tradition Harîri probably took the phrase كبد حرّى.

Advancing one foot, drawing back the other.—A proverbial expression denoting indecision, like the one following, "I blow (as a wind) and am calm."

The Wolf's disease is a name for hunger, because the wolf is ravenous for his prey, or because he bears hunger longer than any other beast. It is a curse on an enemy to say, "God strike him with the wolf's disease!"

Thy disorder.—بُرَحاء is a fit or paroxysm, either from fever or from mental excitement, or from the effects of inspiration, which last kind is known to have affected the Prophet. It is here applied to the passion or anguish of the stranger.

Its blotting out.—I have translated according to Sherîshi,

who renders the word by محو. Another interpretation is "the perishing of science and its schools."

What question, or proposition.—قضيّة is defined in the Ta'rîfât as something said of which it can be predicated that it is true or false.

The chiefs of the schools.—Literally, the mountain peaks. عَلَم is a peak or a ridge of desert mountain, such as serves as a guide to the travellers for a great distance. He means that he had consulted those who were men of great reputation, who were looked up to as guides by all who trod the paths of learning.

Worn-out way-marks.—This second اعلام signifies originally the marks in the desert by which the way was known. In early times, or in newly-explored parts, they consisted only of the hoof-prints and the dung of the camels, and men sometimes found their way by the smell of the track. Thus of Ḥonayf al Ḥanâtim, a man of Taym Allât ibn Tha'labeh, it is related that, having been carried off by Jinn in the region called Wabâr which is inhabited by Jinn, he found his way back, though blind, by the smell of the track, so that it is said proverbially, *A better path-finder than Ḥonayf al Ḥanâtim.* A negro slave called دُعَيمِص الرمل Do'aymiṣ of the Sands, is said to have had the same power. Arab. Prov. I. 492. For the fate of the latter, see Freytag's Lexicon, *sub voce.* When a way was frequented they put up stones as guides for travellers, and these received different names according to their size. One of small size was called نَابَة, one larger صُوَّة, one larger still أُمَرَة, one larger still إِرَم, or إِرمِى, the general name being علم. (Hamâseh, vol. II. pars prior, p. 279). Thus to express that a thing was obscure and unintelligible it was said that its track-marks or road signs were razed out or taken away.

The doctors of the ink-flasks.—حبر is a learned man of the Jews, or of some religion other than Islam, but it is here used generally to signify one skilful in law.

Oft a shot is without a shooter.—Oft he who knows not how to aim strikes the mark by chance. The meaning is, "Though the doctors have been unable to explain this puzzle, yet you may

succeed by chance." The origin of this proverb is thus related: The first who used these words was Al Ḥakam ibn 'Abd Yaghûth the Manḳarî, who was the best archer of his time; and the reason of it was that he had vowed to sacrifice an antelope on the Ghabghab, and hunted for days but could strike nothing. Having returned bootless, he went forth to his people and said, "What do ye? for I am about to kill myself, if I cannot get a beast to sacrifice." Then said to him his brother Al Ḥosayn ibn 'Abd Yaghûth, "Slay in the place of it ten camels, but do not kill thyself." He answered, "No, by Allât (or Al Lât) and Al 'Ozza I will not harm the stumbler and leave the runaway;" meaning that he would not substitute a domestic beast of burden for a wild animal. Then said to him his son Al Moṭ'im ibn Al Ḥakam, "Father, take me with thee, and I will help thee." He answered, "I will not take with me a weakly trembler." But his son constrained him, and they set out, and soon they met with an antelope, and Al Ḥakam shot and missed; then there came by another, and Al Ḥakam missed again. Then said his son to him, "Father, give me the bow." When, then, a third came by, the boy shot and killed her. Then said his father, "Oft a shot is without a shooter," which became proverbial. The foregoing legend is remarkable for its connection with the idol-worship of the Ignorance. The father of Al Ḥakam is 'Abd al Yaghûth, or the servant of Yaghûth, who is one of the false gods mentioned in the Sura, called *Noah*, lxxi. 22: "They said Abandon not your deities; abandon not وُدّ, and سُواع; and يغوث, and يعوق, and نسر." Baydâwi says in his commentary that these were pious men living between the days of Adam and Noah, who were afterwards worshipped, and that Yaghûth was the idol of the tribe of مَذحِج. Its worship was first celebrated at Akameh in Yemen, and afterwards at Najrân. Allât and Al 'Ozza, by whom the hunter swears, were goddesses. The former appears to have been one of the most ancient deities, for it is reasonable to conclude that it is to her that Herodotus refers, *'Ουνομάζουσι δὲ τὸν μεν Διόνυσον Οὐρατὰλ, τὴν δὲ Οὐρανίην Αλιλάτ*; and not as Pocock (*Specimen*, p. 110) says, to الا لاهات,

deities in general, since Herodotus is evidently speaking of a single definite goddess. The *teshdîd* in اللّات would to a Greek ear be exactly like the introduction of another syllable. In Koran liii. 19, اللّات, العُزّى, and مناة are mentioned together. It is said that Allât was a goddess of Thakîf and Koraysh. She had a temple at طائف, where the worshippers made a circuit as round the Ka'beh: Mohammed sent Abû Sofyân ibn Ḥarb and Al Moghayrat ibn Sho'beh to destroy it. Al 'Ozza was very widely worshipped. An image of her made of the tree called سَمُرة belonging to Ghaṭafân was destroyed by Khâlid ibn Al Welîd, by command of the Prophet. On the subject of these and other idols consult Freytag's *Einleitung*, and Pocock's *Specimen*. With regard to the word غبغب, it is said in the commentary to the Ḥamâseh, p. 486, Arab. text: "They (the Arabs) made use of a stone to sacrifice upon, and called it عبعب, or غبغب, with the 'Ain or Ghain." Some verses are then quoted which speak of the غبغب of Al 'Ozza. It is also explained, but I think erroneously, as the name of an idol.

A man died, etc.—Sherîshi says that the composer of the puzzle speaks of a brother because a stranger cannot inherit; and of a Moslem, because people of a different religion cannot have mutual rights of inheritance; and describes him as free, because a slave cannot inherit from the free man; and he adds, "I could not find any of our Shaykhs who was aware why the word 'pious' was introduced, until Abû 'l 'Abbâs Al Layti informed me that there was a subtle meaning in it, since he who has killed anyone wilfully loses his right of inheritance." Ḥarîri, by mentioning these conditions as fulfilled, means to say that there was no legal obstacle to the brother's inheriting.

Her legal share.—فرض is applied to a law which is positively ordained in the Koran: a law that rests on the Traditions of the Prophet is called سُنّة. In Koran iv. 14, the share of the widow is fixed at one-fourth of the property of her deceased husband, if he leaves no children; but if he leaves children she receives only an eighth. In the answer to the puzzle it is mentioned

that the widow in this case received an eighth, because her deceased husband left a grandson.

An ordinance of law.—نصّ is a standard maxim or principle of law which is universally accepted, and which admits of no doubt. It is applied to those propositions of the Koran of the meaning of which there is no dispute. It is defined in the Ta'rîfât as that which admits of only one meaning, or which does not admit of تأويل; that is, which does not require expounding, or admit of figurative interpretation, because it is not dubious. نصّ, signifying to *set up* a thing as a standard is set up, or as a bride is raised on a seat of honour, is no doubt akin to the Hebrew נס, signifying something set up; as a banner or ensign on a high hill, Isaiah xiii. 2; xxx. 17; or as the pole on which the brazen serpent was placed, Numbers xxi. 8, 9. The metre of these verses is *khafîf*.

Thou hast fallen on one who is knowing in it.—This proverbial expression is attributed to Mâlik ibn Jobayr, who was one of the Khalif 'Omar's generals, or else to another Mâlik, the son of Jana, who was among the sages of the Arabs. According to Arab. Prov. II. 109, where he is made the son of Jobayr, he made use of this phrase when some one questioned him as to who was the first man "for whom the staff was struck;" that is, whose garrulity and wandering in old age were checked by his son's striking, at his request, a staff on the ground. Mâlik, who was learned in the traditions of the Arabs, said, "Thou hast fallen upon one who is knowing in it," which became proverbial. For "striking the staff" see Forty-ninth Assembly, p. 655, De Sacy's edition; Arab. Prov. II. 543, and I. 55. It is also said that the poet Farazdak made use of this expression when he met Hosayn, son of 'Ali, who was journeying to Irak, while the poet was journeying to Hijâz. Hosayn asked him what was the disposition of the people of Kufa, and Farazdak answered, "Thou hast fallen on one who is knowing in it; the hearts of the people are with thee, but their swords are with the Benû Omayyeh."

One who is at home in it.—Literally, "the son of its root, or

foundation," that is, one well acquainted with its essence and reality: a common expression equivalent to the foregoing.

As God hath commanded.—It is said in the Koran, xxxiii. 53, "When ye are invited, enter."

The ark of Moses, mentioned at Koran xx. 39. The ark of the covenant is also called تابوت, Koran ii. 249, and is said by Baydâwi to have been in size three cubits by two. The word may thus be a figure for any very small dwelling. تابوت is used in Arabic for a coffin, or the wooden case placed over a grave; as إران was applied to the large coffin or hearse in which chiefs were taken for burial: see Commentary on Mo'allakah of Ṭarafeh, line 12. The identity of these words with the words used in the Bible, the one to designate the ark of Noah and the ark in which Moses was exposed, and the other the ark of the covenant, need only be pointed out.

Weaker than a spider's web; or house.—This is also an allusion to the Koran. In the Sura called the *Spider* it is said that those who choose any protector but God are like the spider when she makes her house; for "the weakest of houses is the house of the spider." It has been objected to Ḥarîri, that whereas God has said, "the weakest of houses is the house of the spider;" he speaks in this Assembly of a house weaker than that of a spider, thus contradicting the sacred text. But it is observed in his justification that an exaggeration in similitudes is not to be taken literally, and that the sin would consist in believing and asserting as a positive truth that a house could really be weaker than the house of a spider.

The proud rider on the desired steed, etc.—These are enigmatic phrases signifying dates and cream. The rich-coloured dates were laid upon the cream and the two were sold in the markets; thus the dates might be called the rider and the cream the steed. Similarly, the cream by itself would be hurtful to the stomach, but the dates corrected this fault, so one is called the wholesome and the other the hurtful companion. This kind of language, as applied to various kinds of food, was called Ṭofaylî, a word derived from a celebrated dinner hunter named Ṭofayl, of whom

an account will be given in the notes to the next Assembly. In the Nineteenth Assembly a number of Ṭofayli bye-names, كُنى, are introduced.

The free-born woman hungers, but will not eat by her breasts.—This is a proverb directed against the practising of any ignoble art for gain. The free-born woman will rather starve than accept the occupation of a nurse, which belongs to slave women. This appears to have been a very ancient saying, for it is said to have been addressed proverbially by Al Ḥârith ibn Sulayk the Asadi to his wife Zebbâ. Ḥârith was advanced in years when he sought her in marriage of her father, ʿAlḳamat ibn Khaṭafâh. The maiden disliked the marriage, but was persuaded by her mother; Ḥârith giving 150 camels, a slave, and a thousand dirhems. Some time after, as a young man of the Benû Asad passed by, Zebbâ sighed deeply, and her husband asked the reason. "What have I to do with old men?" she replied. Ḥârith then in his anger addressed her with this proverb, by which he meant seemingly that she would better have consulted her honour by bearing her lot uncomplainingly. He, however, repudiated her, and sent her back to her family. Arab. Prov. I. 211. Sherîshi gives the dialogue between mother and daughter, and make Zebbâ's reply to her husband to be ما لي و للشيوخ الناهضين كالفروخ من كل حوقل فنيخ; he also says that the occasion of her sighing was her beholding a number of the youths of Asad wrestling.

Forbidden the eating of usury.—It is said (Koran ii. 276,) "They who eat (devour the produce of) usury shall not rise save as he rises whom the devil prostrates by touching (or possessing him.") Compare iii. 125: "Eat not usury, doubling and doubling the sum." Compare also xxx. 38.

Press host on host.—A hyperbolical phrase quoted from a poet, and signifying here, "Mix them together."

The voracious elephant.—"More voracious than the elephant" is a proverbial phrase. Arab. Prov. I. 133.

Say to him.—The metre of the answer to the puzzle, as well as of the puzzle itself, is *khafîf*, already described in the notes to

the Tenth Assembly. In the second line Sherîshi reads ذوية. His observations are reproduced in the notes to De Sacy's edition.

The van of the darkness.—جنح is a part, or the first part of the night; or the darkness of the night. In Ḥamâseh, p. 595, Ar. Text, it may have the last meaning. "She is like the full moon that is in the midst of the darkness of a cold night."

The thunder is lauding God in the cloud.—Koran xiii. 14. This passage gives the name of "Thunder" to the Sura.

The dogs barked after me.—Ḥarîri, in the Durrah, (Anthologie Gram. Arabe, p. 39, Texte Arabe), observes that نبح governs an accusative immediately, and that it is a vulgarism to follow it by على.

Its white hand.—"White hand" is used idiomatically to express an *unasked or ungrudged favour*, as "a black hand" expresses niggardliness; it also means some great action which cannot be rivalled, so that it is said, "He has a white hand in this matter;" that is, "he is most able in it." A third signification is *an argument, or a clearly demonstrated proof.* These various meanings seem to have arisen from the passage in the Koran, vii. 105, where it is said that Moses, before Pharaoh, drew forth his hand from his bosom, and it was white to the eyes of those who looked on it. The Moslems do not, like the Jews, interpret this as smitten with leprosy, Exodus iv. 6; but as a gift of supernatural beauty, the former colour of it having been brown or red. The "hand of Moses" became symbolical of power and ability.

The first of the morning dawned.—Literally the nose of the morning sneezed.

The caller of Blessing is the muezzin who cries حيّ على الفلاح. There is here an allusion to the practice of wishing people the mercy of God when they sneeze, تشميت. For a mention of this usage see Twenty-second Assembly.

Hospitality is three days.—This is a very celebrated Tradition, although by it the hospitable practices of the Ignorance were

only confirmed. "*The entertainment of a guest is three days, and the viaticum,* جائزة, *is a day and a night, and what exceeds this is alms.*" The Tradition is thus explained in Lane, Book I. p. 486. "The period of the entertainment of a guest is three days, during the first of which the host shall take trouble to show him large kindness and courtesy, and on the second and third of which he shall offer him what he has at hand, not exceeding his usual custom; then he shall give him that wherewith to journey for the space of a day and a night, and what is after that shall be as an alms, and an act of favour, which he may do if he please, or neglect if he please."

Visit him thou lovest.—Similar counsels are to be met with continually in the poets. For the proverb, "Visit (only) at intervals; thou shalt increase friendship," see Ar. Prov. I. 587.

THE SIXTEENTH ASSEMBLY.

The West.—By this name the people of the East denote Africa from Tunis to Morocco; but not Andalûs or Spain.

The prayer of sunset.—This is strictly speaking the first prayer of the day, which is reckoned from sunset to sunset; though the morning prayer is often called the first. The time of the prayer of sunset begins a few minutes after the disappearance of the sun; the second prayer time, عشاء, begins when the evening has closed in; the third at day-break, صُبح or فجر; the fourth a little after the ظهر, or noon; and the fifth at the عصر, or afternoon, midway between noon and dusk. Slight differences respecting the time of these devotions divide the four orthodox sects of Islam, but it is illegal to pray exactly at sunset, sunrise, or noon, since this was the practice of the sun-worshippers.

Performed with completeness.—This is interpreted to mean that it was performed in public, since a prayer in public in the

mosque is more complete and excellent than one performed in private: or it may mean that it was performed with its full rite.

Joined to it what was optional.—That is, had added to the *farḍ*, or strictly incumbent inclinations, the two *sunneh* inclinations. The prayers consist of so many رَكَعات, or inclinations, each with its accompanying recitations. The number of inclinations varies with the different prayers; but the prayer of sunset has three inclinations which are *farḍ*, and two which are *sunneh*; and the meaning of the text is that Ḥârith accomplished all five.

Ṭofayl, according to the legend, was the father of all intrusive guests, who come without being invited. According to Sherîshi he was Ṭofayl ibn Dallâl the Dârimî, and according to Abû ʿObaydeh, cited at the proverb "More intrusive than Ṭofayl," Arab. Prov. II. 838, he belonged to the tribe of ʿAbd Allah ibn Ghaṭafân. He dwelt at Kufa, and was known by the name of "Ṭofayl of the weddings," or "Ṭofayl of the brides," from his presenting himself unbidden at marriage feasts. From him every one who is وارش, that is, an intruder while people are eating, or واغل, that is, an intruder while they are drinking, is called a Ṭofayli; and from the nature of Eastern society the race has never failed. The satirical stories at the expense of these people are innumerable. One of them is supposed to sing:

"We are the people who when we are invited accept, and when we are forgotten invite ourselves:

"For we say, 'Perhaps we were invited, but were from home, and the messenger came to us, but could not find us.'"

Yet it is doubted whether Ṭofayl ever existed, for طفل signifies the coming on of night upon day; and from this the name Ṭofayli may be figuratively derived, as one who comes upon a company, unbidden and unwelcome.

Choice of the young camel's hump.—ملحاء is the flesh of the back from the shoulders to the rump, including the hump. حوار is the young camel till the time that it is weaned. In the Moʿallaḳah of Ṭarafeh, v. 93, we read, "The serving maids place the young camel on the coals and hasten to us with slices

of the fat hump." Yet it is said, "More insipid than the flesh of the young camel." Arab. Prov. II. 713.

They loosed their loops to me, that is, they rose up to me. This phrase has its origin in the peculiar posture taken by Arabs when sitting at their ease. The Arabs in the desert had, when sitting, nothing to rest their backs against; it was their custom therefore to draw up their knees to their stomachs, and then bind their back to their legs with a garment, or a piece of cloth, such as a turban is made of. The thing with which this was done was called حَبْوَة, and the act of doing it احتبا. Or sometimes the man raised his knees in this manner and supported himself by holding a sword in front of his legs; and sometimes he knit his hands in front of them. Thus it was said that حُبا were "the walls of the Arabs," that is, the things against which they rested their backs when sitting. The word is very insufficiently translated 'loop;" and, indeed, it is impossible to render it in English. To *loose* the حُبا naturally means to *rise;* and to *bind* them means to *sit down*. To sit in this manner is the most easy posture among the Arabs, and would be adopted in a long confabulation. It is forbidden during the sermon as tending to sleep.

The blinding lightning that *snatches away* the sight. Compare Koran ii. 19.

The sip of the timid bird.—In the Thirty-ninth Assembly a similar comparison is used: "Not longer than the tasting of the drinker."

The two words are السلام عليكم, the ordained form of salutation from one Moslem to another. The men on the اعراف or highest part of the barrier which separates Paradise from Hell, shall say to the people of Paradise, "Peace be upon you," Koran vii. 44. It is not used to a person of another religion. The giving of this salutation to a Moslem is not an obligatory duty, *fard*, but a precept of Tradition, *sunneh*. To return it however is obligatory, since it is said, Koran iv. 88, "If ye be saluted return a still better salutation, or at least return it." The former part of this command leads strict professors to repeat

the full answer, which is, "On thee be peace and the mercy of God and his blessings;" or at least as much of this formula as is necessary to make it more complete than the original salutation. The Tradition given by Baydâwi is that a man said to the Prophet, "Peace be on thee." The Prophet replied, "And on thee be peace and the mercy of God." Another then said, "Peace be on thee and the mercy of God," to which the Prophet replied, "And on thee be peace and the mercy of God and his blessings." A third man said, "Peace be on thee and the mercy of God and his blessings," to which the Prophet replied, "And on thee." The man said, "Thou hast fallen short to me." The Prophet answered that the man had left him nothing further to add, and that he had returned his wishes by saying, "And on thee." Thus this full formula which unites all that can be desired for a man need not be exceeded in the answer.

The two salutations, or pronouncings of salâm.—Sherîshi says that these are the salâm uttered on entering the mosque, and that uttered at the close of the two inclinations with which it is proper to salute the mosque; or else it is the salâm uttered at the prayer of sunset, and that uttered after the inclinations. These opinions, no doubt, arise from the fact that only one salâm is necessary to the two inclinations with which the mosque must be saluted, so that if there were two salâms there would be four inclinations, which is unusual. But the commentator cited by De Sacy is of opinion that Harîri takes the word تسليمة in its ordinary sense as a salutation, so that it would be the same as *rak'âh*.

The messenger of lank-bellied children.—بريد is originally a post-horse or mule; it is then applied to a messenger who rides on such an animal, and, lastly, to any messenger.

Tables.—Harîri, in the Durrah (Anth. Gram. Arabe p. 29, Texte Arabe), says that a table is not مائدة until the viands are placed on it; that, in fact, it means a *table laid with food*. The disciples said to Jesus, "O Jesus, son of Mary, is thy Lord able to send down to us a table, مائدة, from heaven?" where their meaning is shown to be a *table laid with food*, by their adding,

"We desire to eat of it." Koran v. 112. Until the food is upon it, says Ḥarîri, it is called خوان. This opinion, however, is contrary to what is stated in De Sacy's Commentary, page 360, for there خوان is also said to signify the table only after the food is on it. Both words mean the small table, or rather tray, on which food is served.

Become absurd by being reversed.—The commentators have noticed that in the Koran instances of this property may be found as كُلٌّ فى فلك, xxi. 34; and ربّك فكبّر, lxxiv. 3. The last is introduced into the author's second sentence. It need hardly be said that in the Koran they are quite unintentional. The learned have discovered them as they have discovered that there are two verses which contain all the letters of the alphabet, and many matters of the same kind.

Originate virgin phrases in it.—Literally, "Deflower virgins of it." Compare Sixth Assembly.

The men of the Cave.—The history of the Seven Sleepers, so famous in the Middle Ages, is an article of faith with the Moslems, since it forms the subject of the earlier part of the Eighteenth Sura, called the *Cave*. According to the Christian tradition, the Seven Sleepers were young men of Ephesus, who, fleeing from the persecution of the Emperor Decius, took refuge in a cave, and there slept through a long period of time. The legend, like that of Endymion among the ancients, has singularly attracted the imagination wherever it has become known. In Koran xviii. 8, it is said, "Hast thou considered that the men of the Cave and Ar Raḳîm were of our signs, a wonder?" The meaning of Ar Raḳîm is the subject of dispute. It was either the name of the mountain or the valley in which the cave was situated, or of their village, or the name of their dog, which is mentioned at verse 17 as sleeping at the entrance of the cave, or else it is the name of a leaden or stone tablet on which their names were engraved by their countrymen, who built a chapel on the spot (verse 20); or else "the men of Ar Raḳîm" were distinct from the "men of the Cave," who slept, for it is

related that the men of Ar Raḳîm were three, who taking refuge in a cave from a tempest were shut in by the fall of a rock. Each of them prayed for help through the merits of a good action which he had performed. When the first had thus adjured God, the mountain cracked, so that they could see the light; when the second had spoken, it split, so that they could distinguish each other, and when the third had spoken, it opened and they were delivered.—*Baydâwi.* Respecting the number of the Companions of the Cave the Koran leaves us in uncertainty. It is said, "Men will say that they were three, and the fourth was their dog; that they were five, and the sixth was their dog, conjecturing what is hidden; and they will say that they were seven, the eighth was their dog. Say, My Lord knows best their number; there are but few who know concerning them." Nor is the exact duration of their sleep determined, for it is said, "They remained in their cave three hundred years, وازدادوا تسعًا;" which is explained by Baydâwi to mean that opinions differ as to whether they remained three hundred or three hundred and nine years. According to the same Commentator (verse 21) the opinion that they were seven in number is the most correct; the names of six of them and of their dog are given on the authority of ʿAli: the six were royal counsellors, and the seventh, whose name is not given, was a shepherd who accompanied them. Some of the names are seemingly corruptions of Latin or Greek. Ibn ʿAbbâs, cited by Sherîshi, gives the names differently; the dog, however, in both versions is Ḳiṭmîr. This dog has been reckoned by some among the seven most celebrated animals; the others being the *hudhud* or lapwing of Solomon, which brought him the news of the Queen of Sheba (Koran xxvii. 20); the camel of Ṣâliḥ; the cow of Moses, which gives a name to the second Sura; the fish of Jonah; the serpent of Eve; and the peacock of Paradise. The history of the people of the Cave was one of the twenty-eight subjects on which the Jews of Khaybar, at the instigation of Abû Jahl and Welîd ibn Moghayrah, questioned the Prophet. They sent five learned men thus to prove him, and Mohammed, though

nothing had been revealed to him on the subject, answered, in the presence of the Ḳoraysh, that he would give the due replies; trusting that Gabriel would bring him the explanations from God. But he forgot to add, "if it please God," and, to correct him, God left him fifteen days without any divine help, so that his enemies triumphed over him. At last, at the end of the fifteenth day, Gabriel brought to him the verses of the Koran which answered the several questions; but there was also revealed at the same time the following, "Say not of anything 'I will do it to-morrow,' without adding, 'if God will it.'" These words occur in the history of the Cave, Koran xviii. 23, and bear witness that this history was one on which the Prophet was entirely uninformed, at the time when he rashly accepted the challenge of the Jews. For the history of these questions see *Ṭabari.*

Blame him who wearies of thee.—It will be observed that in these sentences only the twenty-eight letters are considered, and that no account is made of *teshdid* or *tanwîn,* or even of the *hamzeh,* in such a word as رجآء, although it is essentially a letter.

He who completes the kindness.—On the meaning of يرب, compare the verses at the end of the Sixth Assembly.

To mould and break, etc.—*i.e.,* to form sentences, and then to reject them, on finding that they were deficient; to be at one moment ready to solve the difficulty, and at the next unable to utter a word.

I seek food.—That is, I seek a solution of the difficulty from those around. The word is used in a saying of ʿAli, which is interpreted to mean, "When the Imâm seeks for a word or an explanation, give him one." You say اطعمت القارئ, when the reader of the Koran stops (through ignorance what reading to give to a particular word), and you explain to him and give him an opinion; on the other hand, he استطعم when he solicits this help. A somewhat similar use of the word occurs in the Thirty-first Assembly, p. 390, De Sacy's edition: "Their seeking to taste of his speech."

My breeze fell.—i.e., my efforts were given up in despair.

Iyâs has been spoken of in the notes to the Seventh Assembly.

There is One learned, etc.—These words are from Koran xii. 76, and refer to the stratagem suggested by God to Joseph, of hiding his cup in Benjamin's sack.

Bestow on the needy.— Metre *rejez*. The letters of these verses are the same whether read forwards or backwards, though this is effected by counting the augmentative *elif* which makes the إشباع of the last syllable.

Excellent are this company.—Metre *kâmil*, which has been described at the Fourth Assembly.

Princes in bounty.—I have thus translated in accordance with Sherîshi, who renders مقاول by ملوك, making مقول a form of قيل, in use among the people of Yemen. It is said in the Twenty-seventh Assembly, "I sojourned with Arabs who were as deputies of princes;" meaning noble-spirited men. The title قيل is explained at Assembly Eighteen. This rendering is the more consistent with the sense, since Abû Zayd praises the company both for their cleverness and their liberality.

Saḥbân would be as Bâḳil.— For the former of these two persons, who is always spoken of as the pattern of eloquence, see the Fifth Assembly. Bâḳil was a man of Rabî'ah, or, as it is otherwise said, of Iyâd. He had an impediment in his speech for which his name became proverbial, so that it is said, *More tongue-tied than Bâḳil.* Once, when he had a fawn under his arm, which he had bought for eleven dirhems, he was met by people who asked him how much he had given; he stretched out his arms and opened his fingers to express ten, and put out his tongue to express one. The fawn which was under his arm made its escape. When censured for his stupidity, he is said to have answered in verse that a man could not help his own stupidity, and that when afflicted with it, it was an advantage to him not to be able to speak fluently. Ar. Prov. II. 146.

The glooming has now set in.—These words are derived from the Sura called الفلق, at the end of the Koran. غسق signifies *to be overflowed or obscured*, as the night by darkness or clouds,

or the eye by tears. It is said by some to apply there to the eclipsing of the moon. (Baydâwi.) Sherîshi also renders the word by "moon," and quotes a Tradition of ʿÂyisheh, that the Prophet one night, looking at the moon, said to her, "Commend thyself to God from the evil of this; for this is الغاسق اذا وقب, the moon which is becoming eclipsed." I have preferred to render it "glooming;" but if it refer to the moon it may mean merely that the moon had set.

Between me and my house.—On the repetition of بين, when it is joined to a pronoun so as to form but one word with it, read the lucid explanation of Ḥarîri, in the Durrah; Anthol. Grammat. Arabe, p. 44, Texte Arabe.

Distraction.—طيش is described as *fear* and *delirium caused by hunger*. It is used also to express angry petulance, or caprice of mind.

Emptiness.—مخمصة is a *maṣdar*.

To his people.—فِئَة is the reserve or support of an army or attacking body; a band stationed behind soldiers for them to take refuge with in retreat.

His return.—إياب, which is one of several *maṣdars* of آب, signifies, according to some, only the *returning* to one's family at *night*.

The seed-plots of advantages: the nurseries, the place where something is planted. This word is used in the sense of a bride from whom offspring is expected at Assembly Thirty-nine, unless, indeed, we have to read there معارس, without the point.

When thou hast got the plucking.—Metre *mutekârib*.

Accost with "Give now," etc.—The meaning of this is, "when you ask, endeavour to get the favour instantly granted, but when you are solicited, put off the asker as long as you can." It is said proverbially, "When he begs he urges, and when he is begged of he puts off." Ar. Prov. I. 41. In the Thirty-seventh Assembly it is said "Remains there one who when he is asked for food says, 'Take?'" At p. 509 of De Sacy's edition, some verses of Al Bohtori are quoted, the last of which expresses a similar idea.

What is postponed from thee.—*i.e.*, what is only due at some future time. لا عاجل ولا آجل signifies *neither present nor future wealth.*

In thy heart.—تأمور, which is تفعول from امر, is a word of various meanings, but seems here to signify the pericardium; the integument (غلاف) of the heart. It is also said to signify the core of the heart or the heart's blood.

THE SEVENTEENTH ASSEMBLY.

In its heat.—ألهوب is the ardour of the horse for the gallop, and thence the gallop itself.

Cast in his bucket among the buckets.—Ar. Prov. II. 436. See also notes to Fifteenth Assembly. Compare also Ar. Prov. II. 260.

Thinner than a reed.—Harîri, in the Durrah (Anthol. Gram. Arabe p. 31, Texte Arabe) says that a reed is only called قلم when it is cut for writing; so سمط, which occurs a few lines back, means only the thread or string of a necklace.

The shears.—Sherîshi reminds us that Harîri, in the Durrah, censures the use of جلم, مقصّ, and مقراض, which, as they signify instruments that are made up of a double blade, should be used in the dual, as جلمان. Yet Sherîshi, though acknowledging that the dual is the more usual, and the preferable form, gives instances of the use of the singular. The shears are called dry because they are used but seldom, and lie rusty during the greater part of the year.

To lay low all he aimed at.—اصمى is said of one who strikes and kills the game on the spot; انمى of one who strikes it so that it escapes, and lingers for some time. To eat the latter is forbidden, since it is held to come under the prohibitions of Koran ii. 168 and v. 4. There is also a Tradition of the Prophet, "Eat what thou hast struck so that it was killed at once, and leave what thou hast struck so that it lingered."

Until the quivers were empty.—This metaphor for the exhaustion of a store of conversation has already occurred. According to some there is a difference between the two names for a quiver, جعبة and كنانة, the former being a large and wide quiver, with a cover to it, intended for the wooden arrows, called نشّاب, which were used by the Persians; while the latter is of leather, made to hold the Arab arrows of reed, نبل. Other names are جفير, which occurs in Assembly Twelve, and is said to mean a quiver of wood or of skin; قرن, which consists of two pieces of wood, joined together, and وفضة, which is a leathern bag for arrows.

Or the word 'Silence' were incumbent upon them.—The sense of these words in the original is obscure. The Commentator cited by De Sacy explains them by the passage in the Koran, "When the Koran is read listen to it and be silent," vii. 203. The meaning in that case would be, "They were as speechless as if the duty of listening to the Koran were incumbent upon them." But the phrase حقّت عليهم كلمة ربّك, Koran x. 96, means "those on whom the word of God is *established* and *fixed* that they should not believe" (Bayḍâwi). Also لقد حقّ القول على اكثرهم, Koran xxxvi. 6, has a similar meaning. The passage in the text may therefore be rendered, "As if a sentence or judgment from God of silence had been established against them.

The term of grace.— اجل العدّة is technically the term which must elapse before a repudiated wife can be sent away: Koran lxv. 1-6. اجل is also used in speaking of the time which should elapse before she marries again. The meaning in the text is simply, "I have given you your full time."

The tether of delay.—طِوَل is the long rope by which animals are tied when grazing.

I will rub the spark.—In De Sacy's Commentary it is said that to give to قدح the sense of *blame* is a mistake; but I cannot but think that the ambiguity was present to Ḥarîri's mind, who is fond of surprising the reader by such plays of language.

The light of cheerfulness.—The primitive meaning of تباشير is the *foretokens* or *earnests* of anything; and it is used in this sense in the reversed reading. Then it was applied to the

streaks of light which the dawn makes in the night, and which are earnests of the coming morning. Hence in the text it signifies the bright gleams of a cheerful countenance.

Eloquence in speech is witchcraft to hearts.—This is taken from a traditional utterance of Moḥammed: "Some eloquence (or exposition) is as witchcraft." The occasion on which it was spoken is given with the proverb. Arab. Prov. I. 1.

Self-restraint.—وَرَع is defined in the Ta'rîfât as the abstaining from what is doubtful for fear of falling into what is forbidden.

The ornament of rulers is hatred of defamers. — Moḥammed said, "He who defames his neighbour to the Prince injures his Prince, his neighbour, and himself."

Excellence is in the hand of God; He gives it to whom he will.— These words are from Koran lvii. 29, where they are used as a rebuke to "the people of the Book" or of "writing," that is the Jews and Christians, who possessed Scriptures, and despised the Prophet's revelation. Ḥârith consoles himself for his inferiority to Abû Zayd by reflecting that literary gifts are in the hands of God.

I do not take forfeit of my pupils; as I do from my unsuccessful competitors. As Ḥarîth was only a listener, not one of the contenders in the strife of eloquence, but an humble learner, Abû Zayd will not take a present from him.

Be Abû Zayd.—That is, I hope and believe that thou art Abû Zayd. The Prophet seeing Abû Therr al Ghafâri, at a distance, before he could well distinguish him, said, "Be Abû Therr," that is, "I hope that thou art he," or "God ordain that thou be he."

He declared the Power of God and our return to Him.—حولق or حوقل signifies he ejaculated لا حول ولا قوّة إلّا بالله (There is no strength and no power but in God). إسترجع signifies he ejaculated إنّا لله وانّا اليه راجعون (We belong to, or are in the hands of, God, and to Him we return). These are exclamations uttered at the befalling of calamity.

Time hath drawn his sword.—The metre of these verses is كامل

and they belong to the third عروض which is صحيحة مجزوءة and its first ضرب which is مرفّل, the measure being

مُتفاعِلن متفاعلن متفاعلن متفاعلاتن

It is to be noticed that each line ends with غربه taken in a different sense.

Loose our loops: to rise up. See Sixteenth Assembly.

We went asunder like the bands of Saba.—The allusion here is to the most famous event in early Arab history, namely, to what is called سيل العَرِم, or the bursting of the dyke of Mârib, in Yemen, by which the reputed descendants of Saba were scattered to the extremities of Arabia, and into Syria, and Irak. The subject has been almost exhausted by Sylvestre de Sacy, in the masterly essay which is contained in Vol. xlviii. of the *Mémoires de l'Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres.* To this work, and to the Arabic texts which the learned author has published with it, the student who desires full information on the subject is referred. It will be here necessary to give only such a brief narrative as will explain the allusion in the text. According to Arab tradition, there was in Yemen or South Western Arabia a large and fertile country inhabited by the descendants of Saba, سبأ. Mas'ûdi describes it as distinguished above all others for its rich fields, its gardens and its meadows, its buildings and canals, its fine trees and plentiful rivers. In this happy country, which was called the land of Saba, there was situated a great city called Mârib, which was the capital of its kings, a powerful race of monarchs, who had defeated all their enemies. But all this prosperity was artificial. The country had been originally uninhabitable, on account of the frequent inundations; since the torrents rushed down from the mountains, sweeping harvests and cattle before them. But Loḳmân, son of 'Âd, he who is called "Loḳmân of the Vultures," and who must not be confounded with Loḳmân al Ḥakîm, son of Bâ'urâ, of the children of Âzar, who was sister's son to Job, or, as others say, son of Job's maternal aunt, and who was a witness of the power of God in giving David the skill to make coats of mail (Baydâwi on Koran xxxi. 11), became king of the country,

after the destruction of the race of ʿÂd. For an account of "Loḳmân of the Vultures," see *Ṭabari*, at the history of the prophet Hûd. This Loḳmân turned the channels of some of the rivers, and gave them an outlet to the sea; to restrain the rest, he constructed between two high mountains, at the mouth of a ravine into which the waters precipitated themselves, a strong dyke, which caused the floods to form a great basin or reservoir. In this dyke were openings through which the husbandmen drew off supplies of water for their fields, and the country of Mârib became fertile, populous, and rich. This prosperity endured for ages. Loḳmân himself is said to have lived three thousand five hundred years, having been granted by God a life equal in length to the lives of seven vultures, each of which lived five hundred years. His life only came to an end when the last vulture, which was named Lubad (لُبَد) died. At last the country came under the government of ʿAmr ibn ʿÂmir Muzayḳîyâ, or the *Tearer*, who was so called because he tore up, every evening, the حُلَّة, or pair of garments, which he had worn during the day; for his pride was such that he would not wear them again, or suffer another to wear them. A more probable derivation is that he مزق or "tore away" the people from their settlements. This ʿAmr descended, according to Masʿûdi, from Saba, through Kahlân and Azd. He had a wife named Ẓarîfet al Khayr, who was a divineress of great skill, and who at her death left her Jinn, or familiar spirits, to Shiḳḳ and Saṭîḥ; as has been noticed already in the history of Shiḳḳ. In his time there arose a fear that the dyke would give way. ʿAmrân, brother of ʿAmr, who was also a diviner, received presages that the people would be scattered into distant countries. Ẓarîfeh dreamed that a great cloud covered the country, out of which came thunderbolts that destroyed all they fell upon. She declaimed her dream to her husband in prophetic rhythm; and her frenzy was such that they held her fast till she grew calm. Afterwards, when her husband was absent and giving her cause for jealousy, she went to seek him, but three moles stood upright before her; a tortoise turned on its back in her path, and the

trees were agitated without a wind. She forced her way into her husband's presence, and in a prophetic frenzy declaimed, "By the light and the darkness; By the earth and the heaven; Surely each tree shall perish; And the waters shall return as in the times that are past." "Who hath told thee that?" said 'Amr. "The moles," she answered in the same strain, "have shown me years of calamity, in which the son shall separate from the father." In the end she bade 'Amr go and examine the dyke, and if he found a rat making holes in it, be sure that the destruction would come to pass. He went, and found that it was so, and told what he had seen in some verses of the metre *rejez*. 'Amr then determined to quit the country; but being desirous to obtain a good price for his property he devised a stratagem which would give him an excuse for selling it, without telling his people that it would soon be worthless. He made a feast, and contrived that he should be struck by a youth who was present. When he had received the blow he declared that he could never bear such an insult, and that he would dispose of all he had and depart. When he had arranged his affairs he revealed what was to happen, and a general emigration took place. God then sent great rains which burst the dyke, and ruined the country of Mârib. Such is the legend. Before proceeding to discuss the historical event on which it rests, it will be as well to cite the passage in the Koran concerning it, and the opinions of the commentators. At Sura xxxiv. 14, it is said, "Saba had in its dwelling a sign of our power; two gardens, right and left: we said Eat of the gift of your Lord, and be thankful to him: your country is a goodly one, and your Lord is forgiving. But they turned aside (from thankfulness) and we sent on them the Sayl al 'Arim, and for their two gardens we gave them two with bitter fruit, and the tamarisk and scanty lotus." In this passage خمط is interpreted to be any bitter fruit, or to be the fruit of the kind of trees called اراك. With respect to عرم, it is interpreted by Baydâwi as "troublesome," or "disastrous," or as "a violent rain," or "a rat," the word "torrent" being put in annexion with 'rat,' because a rat bored

through the dam which Bilḳîs had constructed for them, and by which she kept in the water, having left orifices according to the wants of the inhabitants; or else it is a high bank, founded as a dam; in which last case it is the plural of عَرِمَة, which means *heaped up stones*; it is also said to be the name of the valley from which the torrent came. These discordant opinions conduce to the belief that عرم was a word of the language of Yemen, the meaning of which was not understood by Ḳoraysh. It is, however, the prevalent opinion among the learned that عرم means a dyke, and to this the analogy of the Hebrew lends weight. In the song of Moses, Exodus xv. 8, it is said נֹעֲרֵמוּ מַיִם. For עֲרֵמָה, a *heap*, see Cant. vii. 3; and Ruth iii. 7.

Of the epoch of the bursting of the dyke of Mârib it is impossible to speak with accuracy. It took place probably more than a century after the birth of Christ. Mârib is mentioned by Pliny as a flourishing city in his time; and even Bayḍâwi, with all his orthodox respect for tradition, admits that the calamity occurred between the time of Christ and Moḥammed. Other writers also speak of it as having occurred in the فترة, a name applied pre-eminently to this period. De Sacy, reviewing the various narratives and genealogies, places it between 150 and 170 A.D. M. Caussin de Perceval, Essai, I. 87, inclines to a somewhat earlier epoch, the beginning of the second century. But respecting the emigration which took place we are in less doubt. The tradition related by Mas'ûdi is that 'Amrân, the diviner, indicated the direction that each family should take according to its strength and courage. Those who followed 'Amr Muzayḳîyâ himself journeyed to the land of Akk, which is on the sea coast in the northern part of Yemen, and were received hospitably by the tribes. Here they established themselves, according to Mas'ûdi, near a pool called Ghassân, from which they afterwards took their name; and here 'Amr died. He was succeeded by his son Tha'labeh, in whose time, or soon after it, the emigrants, who were called from their ancestor the Benû Azd, came into the district of Mecca, and either destroyed or greatly reduced the power of Jorhom. Some

of the descendants of Azd settled in the country of ʿOmân. These were, according to Masʿûdi, the men of whom ʿAmrân said, "Ye who have a far-reaching purpose, and a strong camel, and a new provision bag," that is the boldest and richest of the people; and they were called afterwards Azd of ʿOmân. Others, less enterprising, settled among the Kurds in the country of Hamadân, under Wâdiʿah son of ʿAmr. They became confounded with that people, and hence the tradition that the Kurds are the descendants of ʿAmr Muzayḳîyâ. Others repaired to Mina in the Nejd, which is the same as Sirâh. These obtained the name of ازد شنوءة because of the divisions which subsequently reigned among them. After the death of ʿAmr the emigrant families who went with him divided and settled in various countries. The family of his son Jafneh established itself in Syria. Ows اوس and Khazraj, sons of Thaʿlabeh, fixed themselves at Yathrib, afterwards called Medina. Mâlik settled in Irak. The tribe of Ṭay went to the Nejd. The history of these emigrations is very obscure; but it is sufficiently established that many of the most powerful tribes of Arabia and the northern country, including the royal race of Ghassân and the Khozâʿah at Mecca, came from Yemen. It has been conjectured with great probability that political causes, as well as a falling off in the fertility of the country, may have been the cause of this celebrated emigration.

The Arabic writers generally make Saba the son of Yashjob, the son of Yaʿrob (who was the first person who spoke Arabic or made it clear by the إعراب) the son or descendant of Ḳaḥṭân. Saba had the name of ʿAbd Shems (servant or worshipper of the sun), and he begat two sons, Ḥimyar and Kahlân. This genealogy shows that they consider the Ḥimyaritic Arabs of the south to be identical in race with the ancient Sabæans. The name of Saba is, no doubt, of very great antiquity, since at Genesis x. 28, Sheba is made the son of Joktan, whom the Arabs identify with Ḳaḥṭân. There is another Sheba the son of Raamah and grandson of Cush mentioned at verse 7, with whom the former must not be

confounded. This Sheba son of Raamah has, like Sheba the grandson of Abraham, a brother called Dedan, from which it would seem that two different genealogies have been attributed to a single race.

THE EIGHTEENTH ASSEMBLY.

With travellers.—According to some, رَكِبَ is applied only to those who are mounted on camels, and he who is mounted on a horse is called فارس, of which the plural in use is خيّالة, as the owner of, or attendant on, mules, asses, or elephants, or the rider on one of these animals, is called فيّال, حمّار, بغّال, the plural being formed by the addition of ž. But others deny this, and quote the verse of Imr al Kays—

اذا ركبوا الخيلَ واستلأموا تحرّقت الرضُ واليومُ قُرّ

"When they mount their horses, and put on their breast-plates, the earth grows hot though the day be cold:" Dîwân, p. 42. This, it is said, is a proof that رَكِبَ can be applied to horses. But Sherîshi points out that the former opinion is, after all, correct, for the Arabs, when they use رَكِبَ alone, apply it always to the riding on camels; and if riding on any other animal be intended, the name of the animal is mentioned, as in the verse quoted, Ḥarîri, in the Durrah (Anthol. Gram. Arabe, p. 54, Texte Arabe), says that ركاب ought not to be used of a mixed body or train of animals, since it applies to camels only; and so راكب signifies exclusively one who is mounted on a camel. But he admits that Al Khalîl ibn Aḥmed allows ركب and أركوب to be applied to people mounted on any kind of beasts, the difference between the two words being that the latter is applied to a more numerous company than the former. In accordance with this high authority, I have translated ركب simply *travellers*.

The Benû Nomayr.—Nomayr descended from Ghaṭafân, through Khasaf, Hawâzin, Bekr, Muʿâwiyeh, Ṣaʿṣaʿah and

ʿÂmir. They dwelt in the plains beyond the mountains which separate Tihâmeh from Nejd, and extended as far north as Yathrib (Medina). The sons of ʿÂmir were Hilâl, Ghanî, Rabîʿah and Nomayr (see Caussin de Perceval's Genealogical Tables, No. X., part A.), and the sons of Rabîʿah were ʿÂmir ibn Rabîʿah, Kilâb, and Kaʿb. Though having this celebrated kindred, Nomayr refused to ally itself with another tribe, and hence is known as one of the three جمرات العرب. The derivation of جمرة is doubtful; but it is applied to a tribe which is strong enough to depend on itself, and will not form alliances or confederacies with any other; so that to say of the sons of Such an one that they are a جمرة means that they are strong and able to defend themselves. Sherîshi says, "The Benû Nomayr are a tribe of the Benû Ṣaʿṣaʿah, and one of the جمرات of the Arabs, and the most noble of the families of Ḳays son of Ghaylân (Ghaṭafân issued from Moḍar by Ḳays ibn Ghaylân). Now the Jamrât of the Arabs are three, and were called so because they multiplied among themselves and no others mixed with them, for تجمير in the speech of the Arabs signifies *collecting together*; these were the Benû Nomayr and the Benû 'l Ḥârith ibn Kaʿb and the Benû Ḍabbah (son of Udd son of Ṭâbikhah son of Elyas son of Moḍar). Two of these became extinct, the Benû Ḍabbah by confederating with Ribâb, and the Benû 'l Ḥârith by confederating with Methḥij, and Nomayr alone remained. One of their poets has said,

'Nomayr are the Jamrah of the Arabs; they cease not to burn in war.'"

To understand this verse it must be borne in mind that جمرة signifies a "live coal" as well as an independent tribe. Yet with all this pride of race it does not appear that they played any pre-eminently distinguished part in early Arab history.

Wealth and worth.—This is the best rendering I can find for this phrase, which belongs to the class known as إتباع. The two words have almost the same meaning, if مير be considered to be, like ميرة, a supply of anything which one has acquired. When used negatively the phrase means that a man is poor and useless, Arab. Prov. II. 634; and here the sense may be that

they were a prosperous and serviceable people. But Sherîshi gives to مير the metaphorical sense of friendship, which is consistent with the meaning of مير as a *maṣdar*; for the latter signifies the bringing in provision for one's friends or fellow travellers; so that the phrase may mean in the text *well-to-do and liberal people.*

Making a marriage feast.—وليمة is used especially in the sense of a feast at a wedding; compare a note to Assembly Eleven. مأدبة is any feast to which persons are invited. الجفلى is the *general multitude;* those who, as it were, *troop* or *hurry in* to a feast when they are invited. See Commentary, p. 373, De Sacy's edition. دعوة جفلى is a *general invitation* as opposed to دعوة نقرى, a *select invitation.*

Both of settled land and of desert; otherwise called اهل المدر, *the people of mortar,* that is, those living in permanent houses; and اهل الوبر, *the people of goat's or camel's hair,* that is, those living in tents made of such materials. According to the commentary on a verse in the Ḥamâseh, p. 670, Arab. Text, عربى was a man who was of the pure race of the Arabs, whether he lived in cities or in the desert; while الاعراب were those who dwelt in the desert, whether Arabs by race or not; and one of the latter was اعرابى. The Commentator quotes a verse, "They call us الاعراب, but العرب is our name."

Both the important and those of no account.—Both those whom it was necessary to invite, as his own relatives and friends, and the chief merchants of the caravan; and those who might have been neglected, as the servants and drivers, and the lower class of people. This is the explanation of Sherîshi, and is obviously more reasonable than the others given in De Sacy's Commentary.

Of one hand and two: What was soft and might be eaten with one hand, as *thartd,* and the like, and what needed to be broken or pulled to pieces by using both hands, as meat. This expression is ascribed to Ḥassân ibn Thâbit, who, being blind, was at a feast of the Anṣar or Moslems of Medina with his son

Abd ar Raḥmân. When the tharîd was set on, he said, "My son, is it of one hand or two?" "Of one," answered his son, and Ḥassân put forth one hand to eat it. When the roast meat came he asked the same question, and being told that it was of "two hands," he abstained; thinking, it would seem, that he could not cut or tear it decently from the dish like the others. Ḥassân ibn Thâbit was one of the chief poets of the days of the Prophet, and one of the three who sang his praises in opposition to the satirical poets on the other side. The other two were Ka'b ibn Mâlik and 'Abd Allah ibn Rawâḥah. He died A.H. 54, at the age, it is said, of 120 years. Details concerning him will be found in Caussin de Perceval's *Essai;* the reader may also be referred to Hammer-Purgstall's *Literaturgeschichte.* A great number of his verses are to be found in the *Sîrat ar Resûl,* and a fragment in the Ḥamâseh, p. 737, Ar. Text. It was to his poetical powers that the conversion of the tribe of Temîm was mainly due, since he vanquished their chief poet in a mufâkharah. Like Horace, he was more eminent for his poetry than for his courage on the battle field; and his cowardice lost him the favour of the Prophet, who was also incensed against him as one of the calumniators of 'Âyisheh in the affair of Ṣafwân ibn al Mo'aṭṭal. When 'Âyisheh's innocence was revealed to Mohammed (Koran, xxiv. 11) he ordered Ḥassân and some others to receive each eighty strokes with a rod; a punishment which is still inflicted by Moslems on those who falsely accuse a woman of adultery.

Tesnîm, a fountain in Paradise. At Koran lxxxiii. 27, it is said that the wine of the blessed shall be mixed with Tesnîm, "a fountain at which those who are brought near (to God) shall drink." According to Baydâwi, it is called Tesnîm from the loftiness of its position, or the nobility of its draught. He, however, considers that a distinction is made in the text between the مقرّبون and the rest of the people of Paradise; and that the meaning is that the former will drink of the fount of Tesnîm unmixed, and the latter mixed. In Freytag's Lexicon it is said that the fount of Tesnîm flows over the place called غُرَف. It

is elsewhere defined as the highest and noblest of the drinks of Paradise.

Its train.—سِرب with *kesr* is a bevy or flock of women, or of birds, like the Ḳaṭa, or of deer; and سَرب with *feth* is a herd of grazing camels.

Revenge!—A cry of those who call on their fellows to take blood revenge for murder. A verse of Ḥassân ibn Thâbit is as follows: "Speedily shalt thou hear in their dwellings 'God is great! Oh the revenges for 'Othmân;'" or, Oh, ye avengers of 'Othmân; that is, the cry of those who shall take revenge for 'Othmân. Another reading of this verse is تارات, said to be a transposition from وتر. See Lane, Book I. p. 322. The meaning of the author is that the guests prepared to set upon the sweetmeats as men rush to their revenge.

As the lizard from the fish.—The lizard was supposed not to drink; but, when thirsty, to open his mouth to the wind. So the Arabs said, "I will not do so and so until the lizard goes to water;" and the phrase "Quenching thirst more easily than the lizard," became proverbial. Arab. Prov. I. p. 573. In the Thirty-eighth Assembly, it is said, "Praise and parsimony can so ill be united, that this may be thought a lizard and that a fish." In the Fiftieth Assembly the author describes Basra from its maritime position as a place where ships and camels meet, where the lizards and fish come together. Both نون and حوت signify *large fish.*

As Ḳodâr among Thamûd.—Thamûd is many times mentioned in the Koran as one of the ancient peoples who were destroyed for their wickedness. At ix. 71, it is said, "Have they not heard of those who went before them, the people of Noah and 'Âd and Thamûd, and the people of Abraham and the inhabitants of Midian, and of the subverted cities?" (the Cities of the Plain). Again, at l. 12, "Before them the people of Noah and the men of Rass (See Baydâwi on xxv. 40), and Thamûd, and 'Âd, and Pharaoh, and the brethren of Lot, and the people of الايكة or ليكة (Midian), and the people of Tobba' (Baydâwi on xliv. 36) treated prophets as impostors." Thamûd are said to have been

inhabitants of Al Ḥijr, in the country between Ḥijâz and Syria, where to this day dwellings hewn in the stone are to be found, which, according to the Koran and to Moslem tradition, belonged to Thamûd. Koran xv. 80. The passages of the Koran on which the tradition of the destruction of Thamûd is based, are, firstly, vii. 71–77, where it is said that God sent to Thamûd their brother Ṣâliḥ, who gave them the sign of a she-camel, which they killed, and were themselves destroyed by an earthquake. Baydâwi, in the commentary on this passage, makes Thamûd to be the son of ʿÂbar, son of Aram, son of Shem, son of Noah; but he also cites an opinion that the tribe received its name from the scarcity of water, ثمد being a scanty pond of water. The pedigree of Ṣâliḥ he gives as son of ʿObayd, son of Asaf, son of Mâsiḥ, son of ʿObayd, son of Ḥâthir, son of Thamûd. Secondly, Koran xi. 64–71, then xxvii. 46–53, not to mention other frequent references to the story. An account of the destruction of Thamûd, based on these passages and on tradition, is given by Baydâwi at vii. 76; but the complete legend will be found in Ṭabari, whose narratives in this as in so many other cases subsequent authors only repeat with variations. Thamûd lived in the country which had formerly been inhabited by ʿÂd, and hollowed the rocks for their dwellings. They were idolaters, and God sent to them their brother Ṣâliḥ to convert them. They challenged him to go forth with them on a feast day, and to call upon his God, while they called on their idols; and promised that if he should be answered while they were unsuccessful, they would worship his God. They fruitlessly called on their idols, and then angrily bade him give them a sign. "Thou art but one of the wizards; thou art but a man like ourselves; bring a sign if thou be of the truthtellers." Koran xxvi. 153. Ṣâliḥ asked what sign they desired, and they said, "Bring out of that rock a she-camel and her foal, of a red colour, which shall walk and graze." The rock opened and the camel came forth. Ṣâliḥ said to them, "Do her no harm, lest the punishment of the great day take hold on you," (xxvi. 156). Now Thamûd

having but one well were forced to be careful of their water, and whenever the she-camel went to drink, which was every other day, she drank the well dry. Then it was agreed that the water should be one day for the camel, and the other for the tribe. But it was revealed to Ṣâliḥ that the camel should be killed by one who was not yet born, and that he would be a child with red hair and blue eyes. The people therefore killed nine new-born children who answered this description; till at last the prophet became hated, and the nine fathers of the murdered children, who are supposed to be alluded to at Koran xxvii. 49, saved the tenth child, who was Ḳodâr, son of a woman named Ḳodayrah: his father's name was Sâlif. Then they lay in wait to kill Ṣâliḥ, but God caused a rock to fall upon them. When Ḳodâr grew up he became an opponent of the prophet, and undertook to kill the she-camel, which he did by houghing her, whence he is called عاقر الناقة. The foal then disappeared, and God destroyed the people of Thamûd by a cry from heaven. Ḳodâr became proverbial as one who brought evil on his race; so that it is said, "More unlucky than the hougher of the she-camel;" "More unlucky than the Red Man of ʿÂd;" ʿÂd being either confused with Thamûd by mistake, or used because Thamûd was related to ʿÂd; for some of the genealogists say that Thamûd was the cousin of ʿÂd. Bayḍâwi says that their chief was Jondoʿ, son of ʿÂmir, and that he believed: and that those who opposed Ṣâliḥ were Thawwâb, son of ʿAmr, and Al Ḥobâb, the keeper of their idols, and Ribâb, son of Ṣaghr, their diviner. See his commentary on Koran vii. 76, for these and other details.

Their sepulchres: literally, their *tomb mounds*; the heaps of stones piled up over a grave. In a Tradition لا ترجموا قبری signifies, "Do not heap up stones over my grave, but leave it level."

And was free from guilt.—Having sworn that he would not sit near the vase, he could not return without sin until it was taken away. The respect for vows of this kind may be noticed in several places in the author's work. When Abû Zayd's host

in Assembly Fifteen swears that he will not let him lodge in the house, Abû Zayd at once goes out into the rain, since it would be a sin to induce a man to break such a vow. Also when Abû Zayd vows that he will depart, Ḥârith does not seek any further to detain him.

Glass is a betrayer.—At the proverb "More divulging than glass," Arab. Prov. II. 780, is a composition which Ḥarîri may have had in mind. It is an address by a poet, Sahl ibn Hârûn, in praise of glass, in opposition to another poet who had indited one in praise of gold.

The witchcraft of Babylon.—Compare Koran ii. 96. For Hârût and Mârût, and their seduction by Zoharah, see Bayḍâwi on the passage.

Give life to one buried alive.—These words have reference to the practice of burying female children alive, which prevailed among the ancient Arabs. In the sublime Sura of the Koran called التكوير (lxxxi), it is said, "When the girl buried alive shall be asked for what sin she was slain:" and the passage refers to the practice which still in Moḥammed's time lingered among the tribe of Temîm, and was only completely eradicated by the influence of Islam. It is probable that in remote times it was connected with the superstitious rite of sacrificing children which was common to all the Semites, and was practised by the Jews up to the age of the Captivity, as we learn from the denunciations of Jeremiah, vii. 31; xix. 5. But in later times it was ascribed to the poverty of many of the tribes, which made them desire to have among them only those who could bear hardship in time of need, and to their fear of dishonour, since women were often carried off by their enemies in forays, and made slaves and concubines to strangers. So that at a wedding the wish to the newly-married pair was بالرفاء والبنين, "With concord and sons," see Assembly Twenty-ninth, p. 364, De Sacy's edition: or "With concord and permanence, with sons and no daughters." So strong was this feeling, even in the time of the Prophet, that at Koran xvi. 59, it is used as an argument against those Arabs who, like the tribes of Khoza'ah and Kinâneh, said that the

angels were the daughters of God. "They attribute daughters to God, Glory be to him (سبحانه is used in the Koran when any blasphemous supposition is to be repelled); yet they wish them not for themselves. When a female child is announced to one of them, his face grows dark, and he is as though he would choke." Compare Koran xvii. 42, and xxxvii. 153. The older proverbs show the prevalence of this inhumation of female children, and the belief of the Arabs that it was praiseworthy. It was said "To send women before (to the other world) is a benefit. Ar. Prov. I. 228. Also دفن البنات من المكرمات, "The burying of girls is a generous deed," and نعم الختن القبر, "The best son-in-law (or marriage relative) is the grave." The little regard for relationship through females among the tribes is expressed in some verses attributed to Ghassân ibn Wa'leh, at p. 259 of the Ḥamâseh. In the commentary is quoted the proverb, "Our sons' sons are our sons, but our daughters' sons are the sons of strangers." From some verses of Isḥâḳ ibn Khalaf, page 140 of the Ḥamâseh, we perceive the reasons which may have induced a father to put an end to his daughter's days. The poet says:—

Were it not for Omaymeh, I would not be saddened at want, nor would I endure the gloom in the dark night.

She makes me wish to live, since I know how she will be contemned as an orphan, when her brothers of the womb are churlish to her. (Brothers by her mother but not by her father.)

I fear that poverty may some day reach her, and tear away her veil, so that she will be as meat on the tray. (See Assembly Twelve.)

She desires my life, but I long for her death, through compassion on her; for to women death is the most generous guest.

Yet, with the comparative softening of manners which took place in the age before Moḥammed, the inhumation of daughters seems gradually to have been abandoned. It was kept up longest in the tribe of Temîm (see the proverb "More wandering than the maid buried alive;" Ar. Prov. II. 16): an evil which is attributed to Ḳays ibn 'Âṣim, chief of Temîm, a hero praised by Moḥammed as the noblest of the Arabs of the desert: some elegiac verses on him are to be found at p. 367 of the Ḥamâseh. As Temîm had refused tribute to No'mân, king of

Hira, the latter had sent his squadron of cavalry, called Dowsar, (for which see the proverb "More valorous than Dowsar:" Ar. Prov. I. 198) and had carried off, among others, the daughter of Ḳays. Negotiations were entered into for the restoration of the prisoners, and the king gave leave to all who chose to depart. The daughter of Ḳays, being in love with one of her captors, refused to return to her tribe, and her father swore to bury all his future female children, which he did to the number of ten, and thus re-established the usage among the Benû Temîm. The story is told differently by others: see C. de Perceval's *Essai*, II. 574. Humanity, however, revolted at the practice, and rich men would buy the lives of the female infants. The grandfather of the poet Al Farazdaḳ, named Ṣa'ṣa'at ibn Nâjiyeh, thus rescued many, as has been mentioned in the notes to Assembly Nine; compare also commentary at p. 118 of Ḥamâseh. After the establishment of Islam the practice was wholly abrogated, as may be seen from the verses of Jez' ibn Kolayb, at p. 117 of Ḥamâseh, where it is said, "Since the Prophet arose men have nourished their girls." On this subject, compare Pocock, *Specimen*, p. 323. موؤدة is, like حامل and حائض, a masculine form, as being an epithet particularly applicable to a female. The Arabs believe that a charming voice would rouse the dead.

The pipes of David.—Of David it is said at Koran xxxiv. 10, "We gave David a grace (the art of singing); O ye mountains repeat with him the praises of God, and ye birds." Compare also xxxviii. 16. The Prophet hearing one read the Koran harmoniously said, "He is gifted with the pipes of David," the *pipes* being a metaphorical expression for the voice. آل is pleonastic, as in the verse cited by De Sacy; compare Lane, Book I. p. 127.

Ma'bad.—The life of Ma'bad, the greatest musician and singer of the early Khalifate, is given in the Kitâb al Aghâni, p. 29, edition of Kosegarten, and to this the student is referred. Ma'bad ibn Wahb or ibn Ḳaṭan was a mulatto خلاسيّ, and a freedman, as some say, of Mu'awiyeh. He was not, like some of his contemporary singers, of an effeminate and attractive person, for he

was brown, tall, and squinting. He died at Damascus during the reign of Al Welîd ibn Yezîd. A number of anecdotes are related of him in the Kitâb al Aghâni, where his superiority to Ṭoways and Ibn Surayj, two of his contemporaries, is asserted on the authority of a poet, p. 31. But when Ma'bad composed seven songs of surpassing merit, the musicians of Mecca selected seven from the works of Ibn Surayj, which they declared were equal to the former. For an account of these early musicians see the Proœmium to Kosegarten's Kitâb al Aghâni, cap. I. *De citharœdis cantricibusque Arabibus.* Ma'bad appears to have been a scientific musician of great merit.

Isaac.—This was Isḥâḳ ibn Ibrâhîm, commonly known as Ibn an Nadîm al Mowṣili. His father Ibrâhîm was a celebrated musician of his time, but was surpassed by his more eminent son, who appears to have been a paragon of accomplishments. In the life of him by Ibn Khallikân it is said that he was the companion of the Khalifs, a man of taste, and of great talents as a singer. He was also well acquainted with pure Arabic and the ancient poets, the history of the poets and the adventures of the tribes. He was born A.H. 150, and died about 235, being thus contemporary with Hârûn ar Reshîd, Al Ma'mûn, and Al Mo'taṣim. Al Ma'mûn said of him that were he not known as a musician he would have given him the place of Kadi, so large was his knowledge of law. An anecdote related of him testifies to his accomplishments. At an entertainment he discussed with the theologians present and worsted them; then treated on a point of law with success; after which he discoursed on poetry and the Arabic language, surpassing all the company. He then, being somewhat elated, asked those present how it was that he, who could treat these sciences with as much ability as their professors, should be known only as the master of the single art of music. But some who were there showed him that though eminent in all these sciences over the company present there was yet to be found some one who surpassed him in each singly, whereas in music he was incomparable. He wrote lives of his predecessors in the art, and gave the highest place among the earlier ones to Ma'bad.

Sherîshi, who gives an account of both these personages in his Commentary, says that Ma'bad was the most gifted of the older, and Isaac of the later singers.

Away, begone.—The Arabs of the Ignorance, when they desired that a man who was on a journey should not return, were accustomed to light a fire and call out ابعده الله واسحقه. This fire was called نار الطرد.

Zonâm was flute player to Hârûn ar Reshîd, who was so fond of his performance, that he would not drink without hearing it. According to Sherîshi he invented a sort of flute or fife.

The red camels, i.e. all that is excellent and valuable. According to the Arabs the red she-camel could best bear the mid-day heat, and the best were the حمر and the صُهب or white-red. Hence, *the red camels* are used proverbially for wealth. When the head of Abû Jahl was brought to the Prophet, after the Day of Bedr, he exclaimed, "It is more acceptable to me than a red camel."

Saṭîḥ.—Saṭîḥ has been already spoken of.

The court of his Prince; or his Ḳayl. The Ḳayls or petty princes of Ḥimyar governed a great part of southern Arabia, as tributaries, from the earliest times. They are sometimes called ذوا because they generally had names compounded with Thû as Thû'l Mulk, Thû Jadan. When the people of Ḥaḍramowt accepted Islam, the principal Ḳayl of the country, Wâ'il son of Ḥojr, came to make his submission to Moḥammed. According to the Arabic grammarians, قيل is allied to قول as one who speaks or commands (De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 494), but Ibn Khaldûn condemns this etymology as fanciful (Anthol. Gram. Arabe, p. 171 Texte Arabe), and asserts, with great probability, that قيل is a word of the language of Ḥimyar which was unknown to the descendants of Moḍar.

And I had no alarm.—ما راعني الا. This idiom is adopted from the Mo'allaḳah of 'Antarah, v. 11.

Pharaoh.—For the history of Pharaoh see Koran x. 76; xxvi. 9; xxviii.; xl. 24, etc. He is called ذو الاوتاد, for the meaning of which see Bayḍâwi on xxxviii. 11.

He shouted, from جرم the voice; or *he accused me,* from جُرم

The informer gained nought.—حَظِيَ بكذا signifies *he became fortunate* by such a thing. According to Sherîshi, it means *he got a* حظوة, that is, an *arrow* or *lot*, like قِدح. The meaning, therefore, will be, *he got as his share nothing save, etc.*

Now since I have explained.—Metre *ṭawîl.*

Resources, old or new: that is, inherited or acquired. Compare Ṭarafeh, Mo'allaḳah, v. 53.

Long since treachery vexed the Best of Mankind, so that there was declared concerning the woman that carried firewood that which was declared.—The 111th Sura of the Koran is entitled *Perish*, from its first word. It runs as follows:—"Perish the two hands of Abû Lahab, and perish he. His riches shall not avail him, nor his gain (or his works in which he trusted). He shall be burned in the flaming fire: And his wife, the Carrier of Firewood; Round her neck a twisted rope." Abû Lahab and his wife Umm Jemîl hold among Moslems the same position as Judas Iscariot among Christians. They are persons of whose damnation there can be no doubt whatever, since it is positively announced in the Word of God. It is, therefore, usual, when they are spoken of, to add, "On them be a curse." They were closely connected with Moḥammed. Abû Lahab, whose real name was 'Abd al 'Ozza, was his uncle, being a son of 'Abd al Moṭṭalib; his wife was a daughter of Ḥarb, and sister to Abû Sofyân. She was consequently aunt to Mu'âwiyeh. This couple were among the most fanatical opponents of the Prophet. 'Abd al 'Ozza and others befouled his house with ordure; and Umm Jemîl maligned him among the Ḳoraysh. The carrying of firewood is explained either to mean that she added "fuel" to the hatred of the Prophet's enemies by her calumnies; or that she will carry wood to Hell for her own tortures. It is also said that she was in the habit of literally strewing thorns during the night before the entrance of the Prophet's house, on the path where he must pass in the morning. But it is probable that this is but a misunderstanding of a common figurative expression. The unbelieving pair are always known by the names which were fixed upon them in the above

Chapter, "The Father of Flame," and the "Bearer of Fuel." Abû Lahab died of the disease called العدسة, a kind of malignant pustule, seven days after the news of the battle of Bedr reached Mecca; his end being perhaps hastened by a blow he received in a broil caused by his rage at the event. *Sîrat ar Resûl*, p. 460. It is a Tradition that Abû Lahab squinted, and that his wife had but one eye: so apt is the popular creed to attribute bodily defects and ugliness to the reprobate. It is also a Tradition that the Prophet said, "Whoso recites the Sura تبّت, I have hope that God will not unite him and Abû Lahab in the same abode."

A driving forth to his devil.—This is an allusion to the words of God to Iblîs, Koran vii., after the threat of the latter to tempt and destroy man.

He made an irrevocable divorce with joy.—بتّ الطلاق is said when a man makes the divorce with his wife to be absolutely separating, so as to cut her off from return. He cannot then marry her again until another has married her, and consummated the marriage, and divorced her. The reader may remember the story of 'Ala ad dîn Abû'sh Shâmât in the Thousand and One Nights.

As the infidels despair of the tenants of the tombs.—At Koran lx. 13, it is said, "Associate not with those against whom God is wroth; who despair of the next world as infidels despair of the tenants of the tombs.

Man is made up of impatience.—According to the Tradition in Ṭabari, the angel Gabriel quoted these words to Adam when the first man sought to rise and eat before the clay of his body was entirely vivified. They are to be found at Koran xxi. 38. The angel is also said to have quoted the words, "Man is impatient," which occur at xvii. 12. When these quotations from the Koran at so early a period in history are recorded, it should be remembered that the Koran has eternally existed, though it was only revealed to mankind through Moḥammed.

There was a companion.—The following lines are of the metre *khafîf*. They have little merit, except as exhibiting the author's power of playing upon words.

A churl.—For the meaning of جلف, see Lane.

His verse.—قريض is used only of a poem that is of some other metre than *rejez*.

His encomium and his satire.—The former being the description of the maiden, the latter of the treacherous friend. For the peculiar meaning of تقريظ see De Sacy's Commentary: *ḳarẓ* is explained at Assembly Twenty-seven, under the phrase, "The two *ḳarẓ* gatherers."

The people of the Fire, etc.—The inhabitants of Hell. This is a quotation from Koran lix. 20. The speaker means that if a glass vase had the evil qualities which offended Abû Zayd, the silver vases now produced were free from them.

Nor count Hûd with ʿÂd.—The destruction of the people of ʿÂd is one of the most frequently recurring topics of the Koran, where they are commonly associated with Thamûd, as an impious race, rebellious against God. The legend is too long to be given in the already too extensive notes to this Assembly. But the following references will be useful. At Koran xlvi. 20, it is said, "Call to mind the brother of ʿÂd (Hûd), when he preached to his people in the Aḥḳâf." Ḥiḳf is a thin curving or winding strip of sand, and according to Bayḍâwi this was the name of a region on the sea coast of Ash Shiḥr, in Yemen, that is the country between Aden and ʿOmân, otherwise called Ḥaḍramowt. In Mr. Palgrave's map of Arabia, prefixed to his travels, the name is given to a sandy region near the Persian Gulf. At Koran lxxxix. 5, they are spoken of in connection with Irem of the Columns, the City of Sheddâd, which remains invisible to mortal eye in the deserts of Yemen. The reader may also refer to vii. 63; xi. 52 (the Sura called Hûd); to xxvi. 123; and liv. 18. At Koran vii. 63, the pedigree of Hûd is given by Bayḍâwi as son of ʿAbd Allah, son of Ribâḥ, son of Al Kholûd, son of ʿÂd, who was son of ʿOwṣ (عوص) son of Aram, son of Shem, son of Noah. Or, according to another opinion, he was Hûd, son of Shâlaḥ, son of Arphaxad, son of Shem, and was the son of the paternal uncle of ʿÂd's father. The people of ʿÂd were of great stature; Koran vii. 67. The ordinary form of the legend among the Moslems,

founded on the scattered passages in the Koran, is to be found in Ṭabari, in the "History of the Prophet Hûd." The people of ʿÂd would not believe the preaching of Hûd, and were destroyed by a hurricane which is described at Koran lxix. 6, as صرصر عاتية, for the meaning of which words see Bayḍâwi. Two of them, according to the received Tradition, escaped, having believed on the true God. One of these was Loḳmân of the Vultures, who afterwards reigned over the country of Saba: compare note to Assembly Seventeen. *Count not Hûd with ʿÂd* means "Count not the innocent with the guilty."

Recite the Chapter of Victory; that is Koran xlviii., which begins "We have aided thee to a conspicuous victory." This passage is held to have been revealed in promise of the entrance into Mecca, which is spoken of especially as الفتح, or else to refer to the capture of Khaybar, or to the Peace of Al Ḥodaybiyeh which gave the Prophet the opportunity of extending his power over the Arabs; or else it may refer to the victory of the people of Rûm over the Persians, which had been predicted by the Prophet in Sura xxx. The victories of Khosru Perwez had brought the Eastern Empire to the brink of ruin, when Heraclius, suddenly displaying consummate military talents, turned the tide of success in the year 625, and humiliated the Persian monarch by a series of victories. This struggle of the two Empires for regions which were soon to become the spoil of a third race was watched with intense interest by Moḥammed, who is said to have sympathized with the Christians as the possessors of a revealed religion, and who was doubtless pleased at the fulfilment of his prediction. The general opinion, however, is that the opening of the Sura was revealed at Al Ḥodaybiyeh; and it is recorded that the Prophet, when he entered Mecca, recited the Sura of Victory. Abû Zayd means to say "Rejoice in what ye have gained," or, as we should say, "Sing the *Te Deum*."

It may be that ye mislike a thing.—Koran ii. 213.

Both and the boy.—On the *naṣb* after ,, see Alfîyeh of Ibn Mâlik, v. 315, and commentary. If, however, the reading be

كليهما with "Take," or "I give," understood, there is a simple conjunction. This is a phrase expressive of prodigal liberality in giving, derived from a speech of ʿAmr, son of Homrân, who, having before him some camel's hump, cream and dates, was asked by a hungry man for some hump and cream, and replied, "Both, and the dates," which became proverbial. Arab. Prov. II. 349 and 880.

THE NINETEENTH ASSEMBLY.

The failure of the stars.—The literal meaning of نوء is the setting in the early morning of one of the twenty-eight Mansions of the moon, or نجوم الاخذ, while the opposite constellation, called its رقيب, or *watcher*, is rising. The Mansions of the moon, of which a list has been given in the notes to a former Assembly, are constellations through which the moon passes in her course, and the *rakîb* of each is the fourteenth from it; thus the *rakîb* of الشَرَطان is الغفر; the *rakîb* of الثُريّا is الاكليل. As in the course of the earth's revolution round the sun each of these constellations sets in the morning, while the opposite constellation is rising with the sun, the year is divided into twenty-eight انواء, to each of which is allotted thirteen days, except to الجبهة which has fourteen, thus making up the 365 days. The auroral settings of these constellations served among the Arabs to denote the seasons of rain, wind, or heat; just as among the Greeks and Latins the setting of the Hyads or the rising of Sirius indicated particular states of the weather. Thus نوء became almost synonymous with season, and the name is applied to the seven seasons or successions of weather or temperature in the year, which are as follows: (1) البدرى, which is said (Makâmât of Nasîf al Yazaji, p. 217,) to range from the 9th of Aylûl (September) to the 18th of Tishrîn al Owwal (October). The نوء of this period is the setting of Al Faraghân (the Fore and Hind Spouts of the Urn) and Batn al Hût. (2)

الوسمى, which continues from the end of the former to the 9th of Kânûn al Owwal (December), and its نوء is the setting of Ash Sharaṭân, and Al Buṭayn, and Ath Thurayya, and Ad Debarân. (3) الولى, which lasts to the 18th of Nîsân (April), and whose نوء is the setting of Al Haf'ah, and Al Han'ah, and Ath Thira', and An Nathrah, and Aṭ Ṭarf, and Al Jabheh, and Az Zubrah, and Aṣ Ṣarfah, and Al 'Awwâ, and As Simâk. (4) الغمير, which lasts from the end of the former to the 9th of Ḥazîrân (June). Its نوء is the setting of Al Ghafr, and Az Zubâna, and Al Iklîl, and Al Ḳalb. (5) البُسرى, which lasts from then to the 5th of Temmûz (July). Its نوء is the setting of Ash Showleh and An Na'â'im. (6) بارح القيظ, which lasts to the 13th of Âb (August). Its نوء is the setting of Al Beldeh, and Sa'd al Thâbiḥ, and Sa'd al Bula'. (7) إحراق الهوآء, which lasts till the 8th of September, thus completing the year. Its نوء is the setting of Sa'd as So'ûd and Sa'd al Akhbiyeh. The days of the month are to be reckoned according to the Old Style. The three last are periods of heat. Of Al Busrî it is said that خوى, that is, it fails to produce rain during its نوء. The word بارح is applied to a hot wind which blows during summer, by some described as a north wind, by others as a south wind coming from Yemen; the discrepancy being no doubt caused by the geographical position of those who used the word.

As the Arabs, in their observations of the seasons, thought chiefly of the rain which was to moisten their parched fields, the word نوء became equivalent with rain, and is used in this sense at p. 713 of the Ḥamâseh. "I said to him, 'May the cloud pour on thee with a نوء which shall moisten every pleasant plant.'" The Commentator gives مطر as the equivalent to نوء. So in a verse quoted in De Sacy's Commentary it is said:

The نوء of As Simâk (Spica Virginis) and of the Pleiades ceased not to pour on us.

The influence of each setting was held to prevail for only a few out of the thirteen days that the setting continued. Thus it is said that the نوء of the Pleiads is five nights, and that of Ash Sharaṭân three nights. The نوء of the Pleiads was considered

the most favourable; and, according to some, the name ثُرَيَّا was given them on account of the abundance of rain. But it is more probable that this name applies to the multitude of the stars composing the constellation. Compare the Hebrew כִּימָה, a *heap* of stars (Job xxxviii. 31), where the translation probably is "Hast thou bound the knots of the Pleiads?" It falls, as has been stated, in the time of the late autumn rain-season called وسمي. Those انواء which generally brought rain were called مجاديح السماء *stirrers up of the heaven.* The belief of the Arabs of the Ignorance that the rain was produced by the settings of stars was discouraged by the Moslem teachers; and from an anecdote related of 'Omar (see Lane's Lexicon, article جدح,) the Khalif seems to have considered that the supply of rain was a sign that sins were pardoned, founding his opinion on Koran lxxi. 9.

The tract of Naṣîbîn.—ريف is a fertile tract of land in opposition to the unproductive desert, whether the former be on the sea-coast or on the banks of a river. Of Naṣîbîn, the well-known city of Nisibis, between the upper Euphrates and Tigris, it is only necessary to record here that, according to a Tradition reported by Abû Hurayrah, it was seen at a distance by the Prophet, during the Night-journey. "The earth appeared afar, and I saw a city that pleased me, and I said, 'O Gabriel, what is this city?' He said, 'Naṣîbîn.' I said, 'God hasten the conquest of it.'" It was, accordingly, one of the first places gained by the Moslems, having been taken in the year 18, under the Khalifate of 'Omar.

A camel of Mahrah.—The camels of the tribe of Mahrat ibn Ḥaydân, in Yemen. In the Ḥamâseh, p. 783, occurs a verse in which a noble she-camel is said to be from Ḥaḍramowt, and selected from the camels of Mahrah. The she-camels of Mahrah are said to have been covered by الحوش, about which there are various opinions. Sherîshi says that these were the stallions of a race of small wild camels between 'Omân and Ash Shiḥr; but others say that they were stallions of the camels of the Jinn,

which inhabit the desert country beyond the sands of Yabrîn. The race of Mahrah, called النجائب المهريّة, possessed the powers of this savage or supernatural breed, and were distinguished by their fleetness and endurance.

A lance of Samhar.—At p. 227 of the Ḥamâseh mention is made of "a lance of Rodayneh;" and the commentator explains that Rodayneh was the wife of Samhar, and that they made lances and straightened them for sale, and that when Samhar was from home Rodayneh sold them. They are said to have lived in Baḥrayn. Samhar, however, is otherwise said to be a place in Abyssinia, where lances are made. Samhar and Rodayneh are also said to have been people who made lances, but not to have been man and wife, since she was the wife of a man named قعضب. Whatever may be the truth on these points, the names of Samhar and Rodayneh are commonly used as epithets for lances. Imr al Ḳays speaks of "a lance of Samhar," Dîwân, p. 25, v. 4, Ar. Text, and three lines further on of "a lance of Rodayneh, with a point made by Ḳa'ḍab." Compare also Mo'allaḳah of Lebîd, v. 50, where Samhar is said to have lived at a place called خطّ, in Baḥrayn. This would connect the lances of Samhar with those of Khaṭṭ, which are also celebrated by the poets. Ḥamâseh, pp. 26 and 231. In the commentary at the former page it is said that خطّ is the coast of Baḥrayn and 'Omân.

Hill drawing me up from dale.—The conceit of a grammatical allusion need only be noticed.

Won a portion.—This is the technical term for winning at the game called ميسر, which has been explained in the notes to a former Assembly. Each man *turned* or *shuffled* about the arrows, ضرب, and when his arrow won this phrase was used. تلقل is also used in this sense by the Arabs, as in the passage of Ezekiel before referred to. See Lâmîyet al 'Arab, verse 29.

Lay down my neck in it.—The metaphor is from a camel lying down to rest. جران is the under part of the neck, which the camel lays along the ground.

Stumbling with the crazed, etc.—In accordance with the suggestion of Sherîshi, I have given a double meaning to خبط, according to the word to which it refers. The primitive meaning of خبط is *to beat*; and it is secondarily applied to the purblind she-camel, which beats or strikes the ground with her foot, and so stumbles, as well as to him who *beats* a tree for its leaves, to use them as fodder; and, metaphorically, to him who gets money out of people by begging. Thus the senses of stumbling or wandering recklessly, and of making gain by importunity, are united in the same word.

My single lot had become twofold.—Another allusion to ميسر. Ḥârith had said that to arrive in Naṣîbîn was one prize, and now the presence of Abû Zayd doubles it.

Abû Yaḥya is a *kinyeh* or bye-name of Death. Yaḥya is the Arabic equivalent to John (the Baptist), but the signification seems here to be *The Father or Lord of the Living*, from حيّ, Death being he who is mighty over every one who lives.

His pledge was forfeit.—As one who had not paid in time the debt for which he had pledged his property. This is equivalent to saying, "his term had run out."

Bewildered, etc.—Metre *mutekârib*.

The old wine.—So Imr al Ḳays says, that when his mistress's tribe had departed, he remained "as one drunk with wine." Dîwân, p. 36, v. 11.

We took seat about his bed.—There are several Traditions of the Prophet concerning the visiting of the sick, as "Whoso visits a sick person, and sits with him for an hour, God will give him the reward of a year's good works;" and "He who visits a sick person enters into God's mercy, but if he takes seat by him, he is whelmed by it."

Look on this, the offspring of the moment.—Literally, "Look on her, the daughter of the hour." The "daughter of the hour" is a name for extemporised poetry. Abû Zayd, seeing the anxiety of his friends, desires to show them that he is not so ill as to have lost his power of improvisation, and, calling on them to take notice, proceeds to recite some excellent verses. اجتلى

is used especially of the looking of a bridegroom on his unveiled and richly appareled bride.

God has saved me.—The metre of these verses is سريع, which has been explained in the notes to Assembly Two. But the ضرب here is the third of the first عروض, and suffers the علّة called صلم, which is the dropping of a وتد مفروق at the end of a foot; so that مفعولاتُ becomes فَعَلُن. The last feet of the two hemistiches are consequently فاعلن and فَعَلن respectively.

Death forgets me not.—Though the sentiments here expressed are common enough among poets and moralists, yet the reader may compare the Mo'allakah of Ṭarafeh, v. 68, "By thy life, Death, while it fails to strike a man, is only like a slackened tether of which the end is kept in hand;" *i.e.*, however long a tether Fate may give to a man's life, he will be one day checked.

The guarded domain of Kolayb.—Wâ'il, commonly known as Kolayb Wâ'il, was one of the most famous personages of Arab antiquity. He descended from Wâ'il, through Taghlib, and was son of Rabî'ah, who about 140 years before the Hijra was one of the chiefs of the Benû Taghlib. Besides Kolayb Wâ'il, Rabî'ah had two other children, the poet Mohalhil and a daughter, Fâṭimeh, who became the mother of the poet Imr al Kays. At this time the tribes of Bekr and Taghlib paid tribute to a sovereign of the race of Himyar, and being unable or unwilling to continue the payment, prepared to revolt. But the rising being foreseen the people of Taghlib were attacked, and Kolayb and his brother Mohalhil made prisoners. The descendants of Ma'add, who, though accustomed to fierce wars amongst themselves, would unite against a foreign adversary, (compare Arab. Prov. II. 198), were roused to arms by Bekr and Taghlib, the two brothers Kolayb and Mohalhil were delivered, and under the leadership of Rabî'ah the sons of Ma'add defeated the people of Yemen in the battle of Sullân, and gained their independence. After the death of Rabî'ah, his son Wâ'il succeeded, and again defeated an army of Yemen, on the Day of Khozâza, خزازى. Wâ'il was then raised to the chiefship of a confederacy of

Arabs, and was the greatest potentate of the Nejd. His greatness is proverbial among the Arabs, so that it is said "More potent than Kolayb Wâ'il." Arab. Prov. II. 145. The "guarded domain" was the land which he was accustomed to take for himself wherever he thought fit. The legend is that he used to lame a dog, and place it in the midst of any field or meadow that pleased him; and wherever the sound of the barking could be heard, all others must abstain from pasturing their camels or sheep. From this dog it is said that he was called Kolayb; either because people misunderstood the story, or applied the term "Little dog" to him as a nickname. He set dogs on those who used a well before him; no man might cross the spot where he sat; no fire might be lighted near his own; and he imposed a strict game law, by declaring, whenever he chose, that "the game of such a place is under my protection," (or covenant). Once, when he was walking in his domain, a lark flew away from her eggs at his approach, upon which he said, "Fear not; thy eggs are under my protection." Then he improvised in *rejez*:

Oh lark! the valley is open to thee in this pasture land; So lay thy eggs and sing;
And peck what thou desirest: The fowler is far from thee, so be glad:
Yet sure he will take thee some day; beware!

For the rest of the history of Kolayb, his death, and the war that followed, see the Twenty-sixth Assembly, at the words "the war of Al Basûs." Some lines by Mohalhil on his brother Kolayb are to be found at p. 420 of the Ḥamâseh, and in the commentary is a narrative of the events which led to his death. Mohalhil's elegy on his brother is said to have been the first specimen of the *ḳaṣîdeh*, or regular poem.

The light of to-day.—بياض is used here like سحابة in Assembly Fifteen.

Make alliance with him by a day-sleep.—Literally, "*join his cord or rope*;" an idiom used of forming an alliance with any one by marrying a daughter to him. The original idea is that of attaching a camel to a man's rope, that is, of presenting

him with the camel. The meaning of the text is, "Give drowsiness, which is a persevering suitor, the day-sleep that it demands."

The Traditions handed down.—Among the Traditions of the Prophet, recommending the day-sleep or siesta, is the following, by Anas ibn Mâlik, "Help the wakeful devotion of night by sleep in the day." Also of the same Traditionist: "Take the day-sleep, for Satan takes it not."

God smote upon the ears.—This is taken from Koran xviii. 10, where it is said of the Sleepers in the Cave, "We smote upon their ears (with deafness), in the Cave a number of years."

We washed hand and foot for the two mute prayers.—These expressions are explained by Ḥarîri in the *tefsîr* at the end of the Assembly. The اكارع of an animal are the thinner parts of the leg, above the foot, and in man the wrists and ankles. The "two mute prayers" are those of noon and afternoon, because the recitation at them is under the breath.

The Father of Indwelling.—All these "Ṭofayli bye-names and Ṣûfi metonymies" are explained by Ḥarîri himself in the interpretation which he has added to this Assembly. The Father of Indwelling is Hunger, because he *dwells in* and holds his seat in every stomach.

The Father of Assembling is the خوان or round table on which food is brought in; so called because it gathers together the food or the guests.

The Father of Pleasantness is *white bread* as being the most delicate food of its kind; and it is *patient at every wrong* because it undergoes grinding, kneading, and baking.

The Father of Lovingness is kid's flesh, called so from its savouriness; the burning and torment are during the roasting.

The Father of Acuteness is vinegar: the *Father of Help* is salt, the *Father of Comeliness* signifies vegetables; a play on words being possibly intended, since جميل means also melted fat, or gravy, which would run from the meat on to the vegetables. The *Mother of Hospitality* is the food called Sikbâj, so called because it is the principal dish given to guests. The *Mother of Strengthening* or *Restoration* is the food called Harîseh,

because it contains wheat, which is called the *Strengthener*. The *Mother of Joyfulness* is the food called Jûthâbeh, apparently a kind of pie. The *Father of Dignity* is the food Khabîṣ, and is called so from its high price. The *Father of Loftiness* is the food called Fâlûthaj, which is made of honey, and has this title also on account of its costliness. The *Two Rumourers* are the ewer and basin, which, rattling as they are brought along, rumour the close of the entertainment. The *rising of the camels* is the removal of the table. The *Father of Softness* is *alkali*, for washing. The *Father of Generosity* is the perfume or incense, which was used at the close of the feast. The Chosroes referred to is Khosru Perwez who is one of the exemplars of magnificence and luxury among the Arabs. It is said by the commentators on this passage that he was the first for whom *sikbâj*, the Persian سکبا, was cooked, and that none fed of it without his permission. This monarch who, after a career of success against the Eastern Empire, rivalling that of his predecessor Khosru Nushirvan, closed his reign in defeat and shame, deposed by an impious son, appears from authorities more trustworthy than Moslem tradition to have carried Persian luxury to its highest point. His wars being the subject of a prophecy in the Koran, he has an enduring reputation. His splendour and his love for the beautiful Shîrîn, who was a present to him from Cæsar, are often celebrated by the poets, as in the Shah Nameh and the odes of Hafiz, and form the subject of many romances.

Further explanations of these fanciful names are needless here. So far as they can be understood they are interpreted by Sherîshi, most of whose remarks have been introduced into the text of De Sacy's commentary.

Despair not in calamities.—Sir William Jones quotes these beautiful verses as a specimen of Eastern moral poetry (Poeseos Asiaticæ Commentarii, cap. xiv.). The metre is *kâmil*.

THE TWENTIETH ASSEMBLY.

I was making towards.—The texts from which تيمّم derives its technical meaning of an *ablution with sand* are Koran iv. 46 and v. 9, which may be rendered, "Have recourse to, or make towards, good sand or earth."

Mayyâfâriḳîn is a town of Diyâr Bekr, thirty parasangs from Naṣîbîn. On account of its length the adjective formed from it is Fâriḳî.

Who blows on knots, i.e. a magician. This phrase is derived from the Sûrat al Falaḳ, at the end of the Koran. "I seek a refuge with God from the malice of women who blow on knots." Baydâwi explains it as follows:—"The malice of women who are enchantresses, and who tie knots in strings, and blow on them as an enchantment. نفث is a blowing such that spittle comes from the mouth. It is said that a Jew enchanted the Prophet with eleven knots in a cord, and hid it in a well; the Prophet became sick, and the معوّذتان (the Suras الفلق and الناس, which have eleven verses between them), descended from Heaven, and Gabriel informed the Prophet of the place where the enchantment was hidden. The Prophet thereupon sent 'Ali, who brought the cord, and the Prophet repeated over it the two chapters; at each verse that he repeated a knot was unloosed, and when the whole were unloosed he was relieved." Hence, the meaning of Ḥarîri may be that Abû Zayd had in his bearing the malicious cunning of a wizard. Baydâwi, however, gives another explanation of نفّاثات as meaning women who by their wiles loosen the determinations and defeat the purposes of men; and who, as it were, spit on knots to soften them, and make them easy of unloosing. If Ḥarîri took the passage in this sense, it may mean that Abû Zayd accosted with the confidence of one who can solve any riddle and circumvent any antagonist. The latter sense is perhaps the more apposite.

The sheep.—نقد was the name of an undersized species of

sheep in Baḥrayn, with an ugly face and short legs. It is used as a similitude for mean and contemptible persons. A poet satirizing a family of Temîm says:—"O Foḳaym, ye basest of Temîm: if ye were sheep ye would be naḳad; if ye were water ye would be froth; if ye were wool ye would be refuse." See the proverb, "More vile than naḳad," Arab. Prov. I. 513. The author means that Abû Zayd greeted like one accustomed to make his living out of noble and mean.

Habeo, amici.—The measure of these verses is the first ضرب of the first عروض of the سريع; the عروض being مكشوفة مطويّة and the ضرب being موقوف مطوىّ, as in the Second Assembly. Sir William Jones has honoured this piece, which he had probably met with as an extract, by comparing it with the lament of David over Saul and Jonathan. In his specimens of Oriental elegiac poetry, he says, "Bellissimum est in hoc genere poema in vicesimâ Haririi Mekamâ, quod integrum subjiciam." He then gives the translation, and proceeds:—"Hæc elegia non admodum dissimilis esse videtur pulcherrimi illius carminis de Sauli et Jonathani obitu: atque adeo versus iste,

'Ubi provocavit adversarios nunquam rediit a pugnæ contentione sine spiculo sanguine imbuto;'

Ex Hebræo reddi videtur,

'A sanguine occisorum, a fortium virorum adipe

'Arcus Jonathani non rediit irritus.'"

Sir William may be pardoned, since the purpose of Ḥarîri was to show his wit by imitating the sublime elegiac strains of the ancient Arabs; and the English Orientalist was no more deceived than the company who are represented as bestowing their charity on Abû Zayd. Following Sir William Jones's example, I shall ask the reader to compare Ḥarîri's verses with those which are attributed to Ta'abbaṭa Sherran in the Ḥamâseh, p. 382, but which are probably the composition of that Arabic Macpherson, Khalf al Aḥmar. The باب المراثى contains many passages of a like import. The poem of Imr al Ḳays, beginning "Approach, ye two, to the old dwelling in 'As'as," Dîwân, p. 34, is also worthy of attention.

Victoria a cælo, etc.—Koran lxi. 13. These words were a battle-cry of the early Moslems, being taken from the above Sura, which is called the "Line of Battle," and exhorts believers to the *jihâd*, or war against infidels. They are used in the marriage ceremony with the same allusion as in the present verses.

Gratus fuit.—Was saluted with the greeting جُعِلتُ فداك, May I be thy ransom.

Incurvus formâ.—Koran xxxvi. 68. A somewhat irreverent allusion.

If there were a thong to my staff.—This is a proverbial expression, equivalent to "If I had power or means." A thong passing through a hole in the handle of a staff enables a man to grasp it more securely.

Mirages of the plain, white shingle of the hollow.—That is, ye who give a deceptive hope of bounty which is not fulfilled, as the mirage at a distance makes the traveller believe that water is near; or as a layer of white pebbles is taken for silver. For words signifying the mirage or kindred phenomena, see سراب, آل, طيسل, لعلع, لعاب الشمس. The word بَقْعَة means *a hollow where water collects*, and, with the more common and chaste form بُقعة, *a patch of ground or a plain, differing from what is about it.* In the latter sense the plural is said to be بُقَع. A piece of ground thus diversified by pebbles is called ارض بقعاء.

Fold his cloth over its rent, and keep his splayness of tooth from inspection.—Metaphorical expressions signifying the concealment of another's fault or imposture, Arab. Prov. II. 38. شغو is the irregular growth of the teeth, or their unequal length. The epithet is applied to an eagle, because the upper part of its beak is longer than the lower (De Sacy's Ḥarîri, p. 243), also to a talon, because it protrudes, p. 240.

God fight against thee.—A term of playful imprecation, which has been already spoken of in a former note.

The scout who lies not to his people.—"The scout lies not to his people" is a proverbial expression. The رائد was he who was

sent on by a tribe on the march to search for pasturage or water, and he lies not because his interests are the same as theirs. Arab. Prov. II. 525. This proverb was used by Nó'mân, son of Zowrâ, in the address by which he sought to induce the Benû Bekr to yield to Khosru Perwez. Caussin de Perceval, Essai, Vol. II. p. 177.

THE TWENTY-FIRST ASSEMBLY.

Right from wrong.—The best explanation of the original expression is that قبيل is the twist of a rope towards one's self, and دبير the twist away from one's self; so that it might be translated, "what to take and what to leave." Sherîshi renders it "what to turn to and what to turn from."

Rayy.—The seat of government of the region known under the Khalifate as Daylam was a place of much importance during the most flourishing time of the Arab sovereignty, and under the House of Seljuk. It was called Rayy al Mahdîyeh, since the Khalif Al Mahdi held his court there for many years during the reign of Al Manṣûr, and there was Hârûn ar Reshîd born in the year 145 or 149. Rayy was conquered under the Khalif 'Omar by Ka'b ibn Ḳurt, the Anṣâri. The derivative adjective formed from Rayy is Râzi, as Marwâzi, from Marw. This city was the birth-place of Ibn Fâris ar Râzi, the poet and grammarian, whose life is given by Ibn Khallikân. It is related of Ibn Fâris that he was the instructor of Badî' az Zemân, the author of the Maḳâmât, which Ḥarîri took as his model. It is further said that he wrote a treatise on the meaning of words and that from it Ḥarîri took the idea of his Thirty-second Assembly, in which a hundred legal questions that turn on the double meanings of words are proposed. According to Ṭabari the city of Rayy was founded by Husheng, one of the primeval kings, and the first who sawed wood, and made doors, and dug metals. See the early part of his Chronicle.

Loosed the loops of error, i.e. had risen from it. حبوة, as has been before explained, is that by which an Arab, sitting on the ground, draws up his legs to his stomach so as to support himself, though there be nothing to lean against. See Sixteenth Assembly, "They loosed their loops to me," *i.e.* they rose.

Good from evil.—This is the virtual meaning of the phrase الحيّ من الليّ, of which so many etymologies are given in the commentary. The expression belongs to the class which the Arabs call إتباع, and of which they make constant use, as may be seen from many examples in the present work. It is analogous to our *helter-skelter* and *namby-pamby*, and it may fairly be believed that in many cases the second element had no original meaning, but was added as a rhyme to the first. Compare شذر مذر at the end of the Tenth Assembly; امتقع and انتقع a little later in the present. But the lexicographers always strive to give a derivation if possible. In the present case those propounded are all very unsatisfactory; and it is better to consider it a phrase formed in the mouth of the people, of which no true etymology can be given.

One morning.—For the use of the word ذات compare De Sacy's Commentary at the beginning of the Nineteenth Assembly. It is *manṣub* as a *ẓarf*. In four cases the masculine ذا is used; with some portions of time it is improper to use ذا or ذات, but in all cases it refers only to past time, so that it would not be lawful in such a phrase as "I will go some morning" or "some day."

Ibn Sam'ûn.—This was a celebrated preacher who flourished about a century and a half before Ḥarîri. He was born in the year 300 of the Hijra, and died in the year 387. He resided at Bagdad in the time of the Khalifs Al Muṭî' l'illâh and Aṭ Ṭâ'i' l'illâh. He was a man of great eloquence, to judge from the effect he produced on his hearers, but was no ascetic, for when one asked him how he, who exhorted others to piety, should feed delicately and wear fine clothes, he answered that if a man felt himself at peace with God while doing these things they were lawful to him. He appears to have been endowed with

great tact, for Sherîshi relates the following narrative of Abû 't Ṭâhir Moḥammed ibn ʿAlî al ʿIlâf: "I went to see Ibn Samʿûn and found him on his chair in the congregation, and as he preached, Abû'l Fatḥ, who was sitting by the side of the chair, was overcome with drowsiness and fell asleep. Then Abû'l Ḥasan (Ibn Samʿûn) stopped for a time until Abû'l Fatḥ woke up and raised his head, when he said to him, 'Didst thou see the Apostle of God in thy dream?' 'Yes,' said Abû'l Fatḥ. 'It was for that reason,' returned the preacher, 'that I stayed my discourse, that I might not interrupt thee in thy converse.'" The same commentator tells an anecdote which shows the dangers to which men of note were exposed for their political opinions. A servant of the Khalif Aṭ Ṭâ'iʿ l'illâh relates that the Khalif one day bade him go and bring Ibn Samʿûn to the palace. "I saw," said he, "that the Khalif was angry, and he was much feared when in that condition on account of his severity, so that I was concerned for Ibn Samʿûn. When he arrived I informed the Khalif, who took his seat in the hall, and bade that he be brought in. When he entered he made salutation and began a discourse. And his first words were, 'It is related of the Commander of the Faithful, ʿAli son of Abû Ṭâlib (God accept him);' then he mentioned a Tradition of him, and went on preaching on this tenor until Aṭ Ṭâ'iʿ wept, and his sobs could be heard, and the handkerchief which was to his eyes was wet with tears. When Ibn Samʿûn had ceased the Khalif I gave it to him, and he departed. When I returned to Aṭ Ṭâ'i, handed me a packet, with perfumes and other things for him, and I said, 'Master, I saw thee incensed against Ibn Samʿûn, and through his coming hither thou art calmed; what is the reason?' The Khalif answered, 'Complaint was made that he had spoken ill of ʿAli (whom God accept), and I wished to be convinced; and if the thing had been true I would have killed him; but when he came before me he opened his discourse with the mention of ʿAli, and by the Blessing on him, so that I knew he was innocent.'" It must be remembered that it was the traditional policy of the Abbasides to exalt ʿAli and his House at the expense of the

Omayyides, and to paint in the darkest colours not only Mu'âwiyeh and his son Yezîd, and such guilty instruments of their ambition as 'Obayd allâh ibn Ziyâd, but the whole of the reigning House, and those who served them. The men of letters, as well as the religious, joined in this canonization of 'Ali and Al Ḥosayn, and this reprobation of their enemies. Indeed, it is curious to find that, even under the House of Omayyeh, the poets and scholars were in general partisans of the son of Abû Ṭâlib, and the descendants of the Prophet. Abû 'l Aswad, the founder of the system of grammar, fought under 'Ali at Ṣiffîn, and is said to have learned from him the division of the parts of speech into the noun, the verb, and the particle (Ibn Khallikân). The same side was espoused by almost all his successors; even those who asked and received the largesses of the victorious family. In later times there is scarcely one of the house of Omayyeh whom the Moslems willingly praise, except the saint 'Omar ibn 'Abd al 'Azîz, who vainly sought to reconcile the partisans of his own House and of 'Ali. They scarcely do justice even to so great a sovereign as Welîd ibn 'Abd al Melik, though in his lifetime he rewarded the genius and received the praises of two such highly esteemed poets as Al Farazdak and Jerîr. It would have been strange if a popular preacher of the fourth century had really slandered one who was then the chief hero of Islam. The life of Ibn Sam'ûn is given by Ibn Khallikân, who says that no such preacher had again appeared. He was the author of a book of Traditions; among the specimens of his pulpit eloquence is the following: "Exalted be God, who has enabled man to speak by a piece of flesh (the tongue); to see by a piece of fat (the eye); and to hear by a piece of bone (the ear.)"

With a breast-hunch.—قعس signifies the protrusion of the breast, together with a hollowness of the back, and is the opposite of حدب, which is the ordinary hunchbackedness. In the book of which the French title is "La Vie et les Aventures de Fariac," written a few years since by Fâris ash Shidyâḳ, a Syrian possessed of an extraordinary knowledge of the Arabic

vocabulary, there will be found at p. 344 a list of more than 200 names of bodily defects and ailments. This author, whose purpose is either to instruct the reader or to display his own knowledge, makes it a practice to introduce into his compositions as many recondite words as possible, which he duly explains according to the best authorities. The book, whatever may be thought of its literary merits, is no doubt very useful to the Arabic student, and deserves to be well known. I would particularly draw attention to the twelve pages of names of garments and materials for clothing at p. 307, as this is a subject which has been chosen by a European scholar, M. Dozy, for a separate work. The immense number of names, or rather epithets, for a handsome woman according to her various points of beauty, given at p. 241, may surprise even those who are accustomed to the boundless resources of this extraordinary language. For قعس Fâris gives the signification mentioned above. See p. 348 of the book (Paris, 1855. Benjamin Duprat, Libraire de l'Institut).

The cap and the cloak.—The Ḳalansuweh, or high-crowned cap of a dervish or preacher, and the Ṭaylasân or cloak which he hung over his shoulders. Both were Persian garments, which are appropriate, the scene of the adventure being laid at Rayy. The ṭaylasân being a foreign garment, an Arab would say, "Thou son of a ṭaylasân!" meaning, "Thou barbarian." The dictum of Sherîshi, who lived at the other end of the world, that the ṭaylasân was a *green* garment, can hardly be relied upon; though doubtless green was a favourite colour. On this word, see De Sacy. Chrest. Arabe, Vol. II. p. 269.

Son of man, or Adam.—ابن is *manṣûb* through the *iḍâfeh*. Baydâwi at Koran ii. 29 says that آدَمُ is a foreign word of the measure of آزَرُ and شالِخ. The plural is اوادم.

The stumbling of the purblind beast.—This is a proverbial expression. Such an one goes recklessly like the dim-sighted she-camel that beats the ground with her fore foot as she goes along, not guarding herself from anything. It is applied to one who turns from a thing as if he were not cognizant of it, or who

is continually falling into a thing. (Lane sub voce خبط.) The verse of Zohayr there quoted is from Mo'allakah, v. 49.

To increase.—Distinguished from this is مُكاثرة, which is the ostentation of wealth. Compare Twenty-sixth Assembly, "he appropriated me for his ostentation."

Thy two caves.—غاران like اجوفان in the Forty-fifth Assembly (p. 602 De Sacy's edition), is interpreted to mean the two apertures or channels of the body (*os et pudenda*) by which mankind gratify the appetites of gluttony and lust. Such was the explanation of the term by Mohammed, for when it was said to him, "O Apostle of God, what is it that most makes men enter Paradise?" he answered, "The fear of God and goodness of disposition;" and when it was said, "What sends them into Hell?" he answered, "Their two caves, *os et pudenda*." It is less well interpreted as the mouth and the belly. The Arabs have a curious fondness for thus classing things in pairs. Compare the proverb, "Man's worth is according to his two least parts," *i.e.* his heart and tongue. Arab. Prov. II. p, 653, and Assembly 35.

Dost thou think thou shalt be left at large?—Koran lxxv. 36: "Doth man think that he shall be left at large?" Other quotations from the Koran in this sermon are lxxix. 40; and liii. 40. The latter passage teaches the doctrine that, at the day of judgment, a man will have only his own works to rely upon, and that the merits of others cannot be attributed to him. But as the Traditions teach that alms and pilgrimage performed by survivors are accepted for the dead, it is held that he who does these good works does them as the substitute for the dead.

Between the lion and the fawn.—Between the strong and the weak. Compare Twentieth Assembly, "a hunter of the lion and the dwarf sheep."

By thy life.—These verses are of the metre *ṭawîl*, which has been already explained. They present a fine instance of what is called إعنات or لزوم ما لا يلزم, since in the last foot of every line there is a تأسيس, and a دخيل, which is always the letter ب with *kesreh*. Furthermore each successive couple of verses

accord in having the first two syllables of the ضرب identical. The taste for this more elaborate harmony of sound, which certainly increases the beauty of the versification, had become general in Ḥarîri's time, and had probably been increased by the poetry of Abû 'l-'Ala, who composed *Luzûm*, or pieces in which these stricter rules were observed, some of them being doubly, or even triply rhymed (Ibn Khallikân). It is of very general occurrence in the Assemblies, and is elsewhere mentioned in these notes, but the present lines are unusually laboured. Compare page 484, De Sacy's edition.

Death and his stroke.—حِمام is, perhaps, originally the plural of حِمَّة. It is said to signify the decreed and predestined time or form of death.

The terror of his meeting, and the taste of his wormwood cup.—Probably, "of his *colocynth*." With respect to the terror and the bitterness of death, the following legends are related by Sherîshi:—Abraham (on him be peace), said to Death, "Canst thou show me the form in which thou snatchest the spirit of the wicked man?" He answered, "Thou canst not bear it," Abraham said, "I can, so turn aside and change." Death did so, then turned round again, and behold he stood in the form of a man, with black hair erect, foul breath, black garments, and there came out of his mouth and nostrils a flame of fire and smoke. Abraham fainted, and when he revived, Death had returned to his shape. Then Abraham said, "If the wicked man in dying had to meet nothing but thy shape it would be horror enough." God said to Abraham "How didst thou find the taste of death, O friend?" (Abraham is called the خليل, or friend of God, at Koran iv. 124, and is generally spoken of by Moslems as الخليل, a name familiar to travellers from his burial place at Hebron). Abraham answered, "Like a skewer that had been laid in wet wool." By which, I presume, is meant that it was foul and loathsome, as the skewer is with rust; or that it was as painful as being pierced by a rusty weapon. God said, "Have I not made it easy to thee?" He also said to Moses (on him be peace) "How

didst thou find death?" He answered, "I was as a bird that is fried in the pan, and cannot die and be at rest, or escape and fly away." Another version is, "Like a sheep that is flayed alive." The use of *colocynth* and other plants as synonyms for the bitterness of calamity is common among the Arabs. Al Mutenebbi, in the first of his poems to Sayf ad Dowleh, says, "I have pastured on evil until its علاقم are sweet to me." (Dieterici's ed. p. 378.) In the Ḥamâseh صاب and علقم are used together, p. 509; compare also p. 166. The word علقم is said to signify the *colocynth* when it is most bitter; but what plant is meant by صاب appears doubtful. I have therefore taken the liberty to render it by "wormwood" which is used thus metaphorically in English. The usual word for *colocynth* is حنظل.

The day's duties pressed upon us.—This is a free translation of the expression تعول الفريضة, which is taken from the law of inheritance. At Koran iv. 12, the main principles of the law of inheritance are laid down, and it is defined what share of a deceased person's property shall belong to each relative. It may be, however, that the sum of the fractions is greater than unity; and then each inheritor has to give up a part proportionate to his inheritance. This is called عول. For instance, if there be three inheritors, of whom one has a right to one half, the second to one third, and the last to one fourth of the inheritance, the united portions would exceed the estate by one twelfth, and this deficiency is made good by each foregoing a part of his lawful share. The contrary may also take place. It may be, for example, that there are only two inheritors, of whom one can only claim the fourth, and the other the third of the inheritance, and there remains an excess of five-twelfths, which is distributed between them proportionately to their legal shares: see the note on this passage, De Sacy's ed. Vol. II. p. 122. The day, in this case, is compared to a deficient inheritance, because the people, in listening to the preacher, had let one prayer-time pass and were approaching another, so that they would have to compress two prayers into the insufficient remainder of the day. There is a double signification given to فريضة;—a legal division of an in-

heritance and the legal or incumbent prayers. The difference between فرض and نفل, in respect of prayer, has been explained in the notes to the Sixteenth Assembly, under the phrase *joined to it what was optional.*"

Of the prompt.—Literally, of one who draws or girds up his garments in readiness to run.

Wonderful! a man hoping.—The metre of these verses is the perfect *kâmil*, according to the Circle, and consists of مُتفاعلن six times in each verse. This metre was explained in the notes to the Fourth Assembly, where a less perfect specimen of it occurs.

Nor cares he.—إن after ما is considered either as redundant or corroboratory. In a verse cited by Lane, "And our habit is not cowardice," it prevents the government of ما and leaves the noun *marfû'*, and is therefore held not to be a negative; but in another verse, where the noun becomes *manṣûb*, it is explained as a negative corroborative of ما. That إنْ by itself can have the force of a negative may be held as proved by Koran x. 69 and lxxii. 26.

The fire of war.—This is an allusion to the bale-fire which the ancient Arabs lighted on a height to collect the tribe or its allies for a foray. There are various traditional fires celebrated by the poets. The "fire of hospitality," نار القرى, was that which a man lighted to guide travellers to his tent, or to prepare food for them. The "fire of branding," نار الوسم, was that with which the iron, مِيسم, was heated for the branding of a great personage's camels, that they might be known, and allowed to drink at the well before others. The "fire of treachery," نار الغدر, was lighted by a man when he had been treacherously injured by his neighbour. The wronged man solemnly lighted a fire at Mina, during the pilgrimage, and exclaimed, "This be his enemy." The "fire of safety," نار السلامة, was a thanksgiving of a man's friends for his safe return. On the other hand, the "fire of departure" was a solemn cursing of a man by his enemy when he set out on an expedition. The fire was lighted, and the ill-wisher exclaimed, "Away! begone!"

Compare Eighteenth Assembly: "It would be said to Isaac, 'Away! begone!'" This was called نار الطرد. The "fire of the lion" was that lighted to scare wild beasts. The "fire of the snake-bitten," نار السليم, was lighted for the recovery of one who had been so hurt; either as a charm, or because it helped him to keep awake, on which his recovery depended. The "fire of ransom," نار الفداء, was lighted when women of rank, who had been made captive, were redeemed; for they were brought out of the hostile camp by night, apparently to lessen their humiliation. The "fire of praying rain" was a sacrifice in time of drought. The "fire of hunting" was lighted to blind or confuse the deer. The "fire of covenanting," تحالف, was on the occasion of some solemn alliance or agreement being made. See the sixth Assembly of Naṣîf al Yazaji.

A lisper.—One who pronounces the *sîn* like *thâ*, and the *râ* like *ghayn*. The terrors of the day of judgment are dwelt upon continually in the Koran. Compare xxii. 1. "The nurse shall abandon the child to whom she gives suck, and every pregnant woman shall bring forth (from fear), and ye shall see the men as drunken." Also xxvii. 89; xxxix. 67, and in the later Suras *passim*. With regard to the word لثغ it is clearly formed by onomatopœia, the letters of which it is composed being those which the speaker substitutes in pronunciation for others. Wâṣil ibn ʿAṭâ, the founder of the sect of the Muʿtazilûn, had this defect, and showed great cleverness in avoiding the use of words which he could not pronounce. Thus he would say غيث instead of مطر for *rain*, اعمى instead of ضرير for *blind*, مضجعة instead of مرقد for *bed*, and so on.

Viler than the toad-stool of the plain.—A proverbial expression, Arab. Prov. I. 512, where a great number of proverbs beginning "Viler than" are collected. Thus it is said, "Viler than the نقد," or "dwarf-sheep;" compare the Twentieth Assembly: "Viler than the egg of the earth," that is, the ostrich's egg, which she lays and abandons in the desert (compare Job xxxix. 14), an expression which was afterwards used to signify a foundling or vagabond, one who had no known kin or home.

What he sipped and what he supped.—The iniquities which he permitted himself.

He shall bite his hand.—To bite the hand is significant of confusion and repentance: compare the verses at the end of the Tenth Assembly. Thus the much discussed expression at Koran vii. 148, means that the children of Israel *fell upon their hands and bit them,* in repentance at having worshipped the calf.

Belted with authority or *adorned.*—The وشاح was a broad belt or stomacher worn by women. Sherîshi renders the word by محزم "girt."

Neglects the life to come, etc.—Koran lxxv. 20.

And when he bears rule walks in the earth to do violence in it.—This is from Koran ii. 201. Ḥarîri takes تولّى in the sense of "to bear rule," though in the original passage the context shows that it may be better rendered, "when he turns away and departs," that is, "as soon as he has done talking piously, and calling God to witness, he goes forth and does evil." Bayḍâwi adopts this interpretation, but gives the other also. Ḥarîri probably introduced the quotation because it had furnished a subject for controversy.

As thou rewardest thou shalt be rewarded.—A proverbial expression, Arab. Prov. II. 354; probably derived from Christian sources, like that at p. 372. "As thou sowest thou shalt reap." The proverb in the text is given as an instance of the figure by which the first of two verbs is expressed by the second, the word "rewarded" being used instead of "doest," for the sake of accordance and congruity: as in the verse of the Koran, xvi. 127, "If ye avenge, avenge as ye have been avenged upon," meaning, "as ye have been offended." Compare Fourteenth Assembly, "Reward us as we have rewarded thee."

Showed him a sharp glance.—This is a proverbial phrase usually applied to one who threatens or warns (Arab. Prov. II. 410); also if fortune or destiny looks intently, or sharply, or sternly on one. Thus لمح باصر comes to mean misfortune or calamity. Ḥarîri, however, uses the phrase literally, with the meaning

"I looked intently at him." Compare the use of the phrase at Arab. Prov. I. 527.

The better of two guides.—Abû Zayd means that he can show Ḥârith what he is looking for better than Ḥârith can find it himself; that is, if he is seeking to learn who the preacher is Abû Zayd can satisfy him at once by revealing himself, which he straightway does.

I am he whom thou knowest.—Metre *rejez.*

Their Shem, their Ham, and their Japhet.—The three sons of Noah who entered with him into the ark; the one who refused (Koran xi. 44) being Canaan, or, as is otherwise said, Yâm. The world became the inheritance of Noah's three sons, the posterity of the seventy-two persons who accompanied his family into the ark having become extinct, so that these three might be called the heirs of all mankind. Shem was the primate of the earth after his father, and, according to his father's blessing, became the ancestor of the Prophets, all of whom, whether Arabs or foreigners, are of the posterity of Shem. He went as far as Yemen and founded Ṣan'â, and settled the middle region of the earth from Yemen to Ash Shâm, possessing the Holy Place. From him were descended 'Âd, and Thamûd, and Ṭasm, and Jedîs, and Al 'Amâlîk (Amalek), and the subjects of Ya'rob and Jorhom the Elder, who were called العرب العاربة because they were created speaking Arabic; also the descendants of Ismâ'îl, called العرب المتعرّبة because they acquired the Arabic tongue by settling among the former; also العرب المستعربة who are defined as especially the descendants of 'Adnân; also the Jabâbireh of Ash Shâm (the gigantic nations of Hebrew tradition), and the Pharaohs of Egypt. It is also said that Shem was the father of the Arabs, and the Persians, and the people of Rûm, all of them races in whom are good qualities. Japhet was the father of the Saḳâlib (Slaves), and the people of Burjân (the Danubian Bulgars), and the Chinese, and the Khazars (a people near the Caspian, powerful in the seventh and eighth centuries), and Yâjûj and Mâjûj (Gog and Magog, the races of Northern Asia), and the Turks; and these have no good qualities. Of the posterity

of Ham are Sind, and Hind, and all the races of the Blacks, like Kûsh and the Zenj, a people whose position is very unintelligibly described as extending from Abyssinia to the island or country of Waḳwâḳ (the home of Ibn Ṭofayl's Ḥayy ibn Yaḳẓân), but who may be taken to be the people of Eastern Africa; Ham also begat the Abyssinians and others. On this subject refer to Al Mas'ûdi. A useful work is Géographie du Moyen Age étudiée par Joachim Lelewel; Bruxelles, 1852.

'Amr ibn 'Obayd was a celebrated ascetic (زاهد) and preacher of the time of the Khalif Al Manṣûr. His life is narrated by Ibn Khallikân; and Sherîshi gives a lengthy notice of him in his Commentary. He was born A.H. 80 (A.D. 700), and died about 144. He was a freedman of the Benû 'Oḳayl, and his father had been one of the prisoners taken at Cabul. This person, who was in the police of Basra, was either a man of indifferent character, or, from his office, unpopular with the people, for they used to say, when they saw his son 'Amr with him, "There goes the Best of men, the son of the Worst of men." "Truly," returned the father, "he is Abraham and I am Âzar." (Âzar was the idolatrous father of Abraham: Koran vi. 74). 'Amr, though he prayed so constantly that his forehead was horny from prostration, was one of the leaders of the heterodox sect of the Mu'tazilûn. He had been a pupil of Al Ḥasan al Baṣri, but left him for the new tenets. 'Amr was one of the chief cultivators of scholastic theology and metaphysics, and wrote a work on the *Ḳadari* doctrine, which attributes free-will and optional actions to man, that is, which allows to man, in his own actions, *Ḳadar*, or determining power, such as God possesses over the universe, Koran xxxiii. 38, and which He uses in the creation and government of things, xv. 21; liv. 49. The contrary doctrine, called that of *Jabr*, Constraint, is unlimited predestination, the attribution of everything to God, and the assertion that all human actions are produced by Physical Premotion, and are of the nature of a spasm. It is doubtful whether the name Mu'tazil was first given to 'Amr or to Wâṣil ibn 'Aṭâ al Ghazzâl. Accord-

ing to one account Wâṣil disputed with Al Ḥasan on the question whether one who has committed deadly sin could be called a believer, and in consequence took a separate place in the mosque to expound his doctrine. Al Ḥasan then said to his pupils, "He secedes from us;" and thus the name took its origin. But, according to another tradition, this phrase was first used by Abû 'l Khaṭṭâb Ḳatâdeh, who, being blind, entered the mosque to hear Al Ḥasan, but fell upon ʿAmr and some of his followers, who had just left Al Ḥasan's circle and formed one of their own. Finding from the tenets propounded that it was not Al Ḥasan's circle, he exclaimed, "These are the seceders," and at once left them. From that time they were called "Seceders," Muʿtazilûn; see Ibn Khallikân, life of Ḳatâdeh. For information on this powerful and intellectual sect, of which ʿAmr became one of the chief doctors, consult Schmölders, *Ecoles philosophiques chez les Arabes*, and Steiner, *Die Muʿaziliten oder die Freidenker im Islâm;* also Pocock's *Specimen*, and Shahrestâni. ʿAmr, by his contempt for the things of this world, obtained the admiration of his contemporaries, and was much esteemed by Al Manṣûr, with whom he lived on terms of intimacy before the latter's accession to the sovereignty. Once, when the Khalif sent for him, he preached a sermon, reminding him that as his predecessors had given place to him, so he must yield the throne to others, bidding him prepare for the day which should never be followed by another night, and warning him that God might destroy his splendour as he had destroyed *Irem <u>dh</u>ât al ʿImâd* (the city of Sheddâd, see Koran lxxxix. 6.) He would take no largess, and carried his bluntness to the extreme of rudeness. Al Manṣûr asked him if there was anything he required, and ʿAmr answered "That thou do not send for me again, but wait till I come to thee." "In that case," said the Khalif, "we shall never meet." "That is what I desire," returned the preacher, and withdrew. Al Manṣûr then uttered in verse:—

"All of you walk mincingly; All of you seek your gain; All except 'Amr ibn 'Obayd."

The Khalif grieved much at his death, and indited some verses on the occasion, an unusual honour for a subject.

Keep to truth.—Metre سريع, as before explained.

The rolls of folding.—Letters and writings.

What locust had gone off with him.—A proverbial expression, meaning "what had become of him." The Arabs also say of any one that is lost, "The ʿAnḳâ has flown off with him." Arab. Prov. II. 25. The ʿAnḳâ, the Persian سيمرغ, is a fabulous bird, which is supposed to dwell on the Ḳâf, or mountain barrier, which surrounds the world.

THE TWENTY-SECOND ASSEMBLY.

A time of quiet.—فترة is weakness, langour, intermission of strength, and thus signifies a time when the fury of war languishes, an interval of quiet, a truce. Its meaning as the interval between two prophets, as betwen Jesus and Moḥammed, is founded on Koran v. 22. The frequent political disturbances which impoverished Irak in Ḥarîri's time have been referred to in the Introduction, and will be found more fully detailed in the Introduction to the second edition of De Sacy's Ḥarîri.

The sons of Al Furât were a family highly distinguished in the civil service of the Khalifate during the fourth century. They followed the profession of *inshâ'* or official writing, and rose to the highest posts, even to the wazirate. There were four brothers of them who attained to eminence during the reign of Al Muḳtadir b 'illâh, namely Aḥmed abû 'l ʿAbbâs, and Abû 'l Ḥasan ʿAli and Abû ʿAbd allâh Jaʿfar and Abû ʿIsa Ibrahîm. They were the sons of Moḥammed ibn Mûsa ibn al Ḥasan ibn al Furât, who was an agent to Aḥmed ibn al Haḍîb the wazîr of the Khalif Al Muntaṣir son of Al Mutewekkil, A.H. 247. The most celebrated of the family was Abû 'l Ḥasan ʿAli, who was three times wazîr to Al Muḳtadir. His life is to be found in

Ibn Khallikân. He was a most gifted man, and an excellent administrator, and, though liberal even to extravagance, amassed great wealth. When he was dismissed for the first time, A.H. 299 (A.D. 912), the Khalif had him arrested in his palace, and seized on all his wealth. From that time to his reinstatement in 304 the produce of his estates to the public treasury amounted to 7,000,000 denars. On his re-appointment the Khalif showed him the highest favours, sending him seven cloaks of honour and 300,000 dirhems to be distributed among his attendants. He continued in place for two years, but was then arrested a second time, and thrown into prison. He was restored to his post for the third time in 311, and marked his resumption of office by acts which have cast a stain on his memory. He exacted large sums from many persons, and allowed his son Abû 'l Muḥassin, a violent young man, to put to death Ḥamîd ibn al 'Abbâs, the late wazîr. He fell for the third time the next year, when it was found that he possessed upwards of ten millions of denars, and that his landed property produced a million of denars annually. A few days later he and his son Muḥassin were put to death by Nazûḳ, the chief of the police. This Abû 'l Ḥasan had been a simple *kâtib*, and was first raised to high posts together with his brother Abû 'l 'Abbâs by the Khalif Al Mo'tadid for drawing up a financial statement. This brother died some years before in 291. The third brother, Ja'far, was offered the wazirate, but declined it; it was then given to his son Abû 'l Fatḥ ibn Ja'far in 320, but he was not long in power, for Al Muḳtadir was murdered the same year, and the wazîr concealed himself through fear of Al Ḳâhir, the new Khalif. Abû 'l Fatḥ, however, obtained subsequently the government of Syria, and after the deposition of Al Ḳâhir, was offered the wazirate by Ar Râḍi; but finding the State in confusion he prudently returned to his government. The son of Abû 'l Fatḥ was Abû 'l Faḍl Ja'far ibn al Faḍl, called like himself Al Ḥinzâba from the name of Abû 'l Fatḥ's mother. (حنزاب means a person or beast of short and strong make). This Ibn Ḥinzâba, whose life is also given by Ibn Khallikân, admin-

istered Egypt under the clever and strong-minded negro eunuch Kâfûr, the patron and then the enemy of Al Mutenebbi, and the subject of his praise or satire in some of his most interesting poems. This family, distinguished generation after generation for official and administrative skill, might well be spoken of as models of excellence by one of their own profession, like the author. For more on this subject see Weil, *Geschichte der Chalifen*, on Al Muktadir b'illâh, II. 539. Sherîshi gives a specimen of Abû 'l Ḥasan's wit. Some of the learned were maintaining in his presence the untenable doctrine that the letter *sîn* may in all cases be substituted for *ṣâd;* that, in fact, the two letters are interchangeable. Said the wazîr, "Do you read in the Kuran, 'There shall enter into Paradise مَن سلح مِن آبائهم as well as من صلح?'" Another story of the same kind, given by the commentator, is that An Naḍr ibn Shemîl was sick, and a number of his friends came to see him, among them a certain man who was bye-named Abû Ṣâliḥ. Said Abû Ṣâliḥ to the sick man "امسح الله ما بك." "You should use the *ṣâd*, not the *sîn*," said An Naḍr, "for the meaning is, 'May God cause the sickness to depart,' and the *ṣâd* is according to the speech of the Arabs." Abû Ṣaliḥ answered that the *sîn* was always interchangeable with the *ṣâd*, and instanced صراط and سقر, سراط and سقر. "Are you then Abû Sâliḥ?" said the sick man. It may be mentioned that all the words which are spelt with either of these letters indifferently are given in some verses of the 46th Assembly.

Al Ḳaḳâ' ibn Showr, a man of the Arabs famous for his generosity, and reckoned with Ka'b ibn Mâmeh and Ḥâtim. Of him it is said, "No ill-fate has he who sits with Al Ḳa'ḳâ'," Arab. Prv. II, 540, since it was his custom to relieve all who visited him. Of Ka'b ibn Mâmeh there are several proverbs. It is said "More generous than Ka'b ibn Mâmeh." His act of generosity was the same as that of Sir Philip Sidney at Zutphen. He was in a caravan in the desert when the water ran short, so that they took to measuring it by the stone called

مَقلة; that is, a stone was put into the cup, into which was then poured water until it covered the stone, so that every one might have an equal share. This stone was called حساة القسم. When the turn came for Ka'b to drink he saw a man of the tribe of An Namir ibn Ḳâsiṭ look wistfully on him, and he said to him who was distributing, "Give to drink to thy brother," meaning the man of Namir, and himself went without. The next day he saw the man of Namir look on him a second time, and he gave up his portion again. But when the time came to mount he could not move, so they put garments over him to scare the beasts, and left him to die. His father indited some verses to his memory. Hence the proverbs, "More generous than Ka'b ibn Mâmeh," Arab. Prov. I. 325. "Give to drink to thy brother the Namirî," 608. Another proverb attributed to Ka'b, is extant, "This is my bleeding," II. 867, which he uttered when in captivity among the tribe of 'Anazeh, II. 390. He had been told by the mistress of the house to bleed the camel to make blood-puddings for the guests. Indignant at this stinginess he had killed it; and when rated by the housewife he uttered the above saying. But this story is also told of Ḥâtim, with the addition that the lady slapped his face. See the proverb, "If any other bracelet-wearer had slapped me," II. 465. The bleeding of the live camel was only practised by the hospitable in time of need. Compare Ḥamâseh, p. 645, "The noble man shuns perfidy, even though his food in the evening be a portion from the blood of vein-cutting." At Arab. Prov. II. 441, is the saying "He is not refused who has the blood let for him." I cannot ascertain whether this Al Ḳa'ḳâ' is to be identified with the bold Moslem warrior of the time of the Prophet and the early Khalifate, who took Ḥolwân under Sa'd ibn Abî Waḳḳâṣ, and negotiated for 'Ali with Taḥah and Az Zobayr.

Plenty after want.—Compare the use of this expression in the Thirty-fourth Assembly, near the beginning.

As the fingertop is above the finger: a proverbial expression.

Lofty-sailed boats.—The ordinary reading at Koran lv. 24, is

مُنشَآت, with the *feth*, though, according to Baydâwi, both Hamzeh and Abû Bekr read with *kesr*. The meaning, however, is the same, whether the phrase be "lifted up as to their sails," or "lifting up their sails." Sherîshi renders the word by مصنوعات, which Baydâwi also gives as an interpretation. It hardly accords, however, with the context, "on the sea, like mountains," or masses of rock that served as way-marks in the deserts.

Thou wouldst think it immovable.—These words are from Koran xxvii. 90, "Thou shalt see the mountains which thou wouldst think immovable, fleet as the fleeting of the clouds."

On the deep.—Compare Mo'allaḳah of Ṭarafeh, v. 5. It is there explained as the mass or bulk of the water.

Our cushion-saddle.—وِلِيَّة is the cushion placed on the back of the camel, under the saddle, to ease the motion. But according to Sherîshi and the commentator quoted by De Sacy, there is an allusion to the word وَلِيّ, meaning a *saint* or *favourite of God*, since people say, "Such a man is a saint, he walks on the water:" it being the belief that the saints have such a power. For the definition of this word see *Tâ'rîfât*.

Deemed his shadow to be heavy, etc.—*i.e.* considered his presence to be disagreeable. The ثقيل is he who wearies you by his company, as in a prolonged visit. According to 'Âyisheh it was on account of such persons that the revelation was made, (Koran xxxiii. 53), "When ye have eaten separate." See note to Fourth Assembly, near the end. When Abû Hurayrah saw one of these he exclaimed "Allâhumma (O God), forgive him, and deliver us from him." Also Jâlînûs (Galen) when asked why the weight of a bore's company was more distressing than the weight of a burden made answer that the weight of the former was on the heart alone, while in bearing a material burden the heart was aided by the limbs. There is a disposition among Orientals to make Galen a sort of sage; compare one of the stories in the 4th chapter of the Gulistan. The above anecdotes are from Sherîshi.

He praised God after sneezing, but no one blessed him.—This usage was once common in Europe as well as in the East.

According to two Traditions the Prophet said, "If when one of you sneezes or eructs he utters the words 'Praise be to God,' he averts seventy diseases, the least of which is the *juthâm* (elephantiasis, that species of leprosy which causes the members to fall off; a more terrible disease than *baraṣ*)." He also said, "If one of you sneeze let him utter 'Praise be to God,' and let those who salute him in return say, 'God have mercy on thee,' and let him then say, يهديكم الله ويصلح بالكم, (make good your condition in religion and in the world by propitious aid and strengthening);" see Baydâwi on Koran xlvii. 2 and 6. It is related that when God created Adam of clay he ordered the human soul to enter his body. On this the dry clay changed at once into bones, flesh, nerves, and the other constituents of man's body. Adam, awakening to life, sneezed, and immediately exclaimed, "Praise to God," and Gabriel answered, "God have mercy on thee, Adam" (Ṭabari).

The help which comes to the wronged.—Koran xxii. 59. Those who only retaliate according to the injury received, will, if injured in return for the retaliation, be assisted by God.

The bye-paths of the serious and the gay.—شجون are the tracks in a *wadi*, or mountain valley, through which winter torrents flow. The first who used the expression, "The tale has bye-paths," that is, "there is something more to be told of it," was Ḍabbat ibn Udd ibn Ṭâbikhah, a descendant of Moḍar. The history is given by Maydâni, Arab. Prov. I. 350. Ḍabbah had two sons, Sa'd and Su'ayd, and when one of his camels strayed during the night he sent them in search of her. Sa'd found her, and when he brought her back at night the father saw a figure in the dark, and exclaimed, "Is it Sa'd or Su'ayd?" a saying that became proverbial, and is used in the sense of 'Is it the one or the other?" as when Al Ḥajjâj asked Kotaybet ibn Muslim, on the latter marrying a wife, "Is it Sa'd or Su'ayd?" meaning, "Is it a handsome wife or an ugly one?" Arab. Prov. I. 601. Su'ayd wandered in search of the camel, and fell in with Al Ḥârith ibn Ka'b. The youth had on two mantles, and Ḥârith demanded them; when Su'ayd would not

part with them, Ḥârith killed him and took them. Sometime after Ḍabbah made the pilgrimage (pagan) to Mecca, and came to the fair of ʿOkâẓ, where he met the murderer wearing his son's two mantles. He recognized them and said, "Wilt thou tell where thou gottest these two?" Ḥârith answered, "I met a youth who wore them and I asked him for them, and when he would not give them I killed him and took them." Ḍabbah said, "Was it with this sword of thine?" He said "Yes." Said Ḍabbah, "Give it me to look at, for I think it is a sharp one." Ḥârith gave it, and Ḍabbah, brandishing the weapon, exclaimed, "The tale has bye-paths," meaning "There is something more in it than thou knowest." Then at once he slew Ḥârith with it. And when it was said to him, "What, Ḍabbah, hast thou killed him in the sacred month?" he answered, "The sword has outstripped remonstrance," which also became proverbial: Arab. Prov. I. 599. Ḥarîri's meaning is that the conversation of the company flowed as one subject suggested another.

The pen of correspondence, etc.—It is necessary here to render the original somewhat freely. خاطب may be either an orator, choice of speech, or a *wooer* who wins hearts by his elegant diction. حاطب is the gatherer of firewood, who puts into his rope all that he can find, without selection; and is thus applied to one who uses the first phrase that comes to hand without taste or judgment. Compare the phrase, "One who gathers wood by night," in Ḥarîri's Preface.

Johayneh for information—There is discrepancy both as to the form of this name and the meaning. It is read not only as above, but also Jofayneh and Ḥofayneh, the former being on the authority of Al Aṣmaʿî. See Arab. Prov. II. 71: "With Johayneh is the certain information." According to one legend he was a wine-seller, in whose tavern two men had quarreled. When a third party had endeavoured to separate them, one of the two had slain him. They were both arrested, and when the judge wished to learn which of the two was guilty, he said, "Bring Jofayneh, for he has the certain information." According to Hishâm ibn al Kelbi, the story is as follows: Al

Akhnas ibn al Ka'b was a man of Johayneh, who for some act that he committed was obliged to flee from his people. He met with Ḥoṣayn ibn 'Amr ibn Mo'âwiat ibn Kilâb, or, as others say, another Ḥoṣayn of Ghaṭafân, who had also turned vagabond; and they agreed to rob together, even the men of their own tribes. The adventure which followed is too long to be narrated here: it will be found in Maydâni at the place cited. Suffice it to say that the man of Johayneh in the end slew his companion, and took all the booty. In returning home to his people, with the view of reconciling himself with them, he passed two sub-tribes of the sons of Ḳays, called Merâj and Anmâr, and a woman came forth who was seeking Ḥoṣayn. He asked who she was, and she answered, "I am Ṣakhrah, the wife of Ḥoṣayn." He said, "I have killed him." She said, "Thou liest; such an one as thou kills not such an one as he: if the tribe (or the men of it) were not away, thou durst not have spoken thus." Then he went home and made up matters with his tribe, and came and stood where he might be heard, and declaimed the following verses:—

Of how many a lion, tawny, breaking the prey, the father of two cubs, whose dwelling is the thicket,

And of how many a rider, whom thou wouldest not despise if thine eyes were to light where he had fallen,

Have I cloven the topmost skull with my sword, that he has lain motionless on the plain;

And his wife has sorrowed for him, wailing in the night without rest;

Like Ṣakhrah, when she questioned Merâj and Anmâr, whose knowledge was only guessing.

She asked each band of travellers concerning Ḥoṣayn, but at Johayneh is the certain information.

Now if any ask concerning him, know that I can tell him all clearly.

Johayneh is my tribe, a race of kings; when they seek lofty deeds they are not abased.

Sherîshi quotes these verses differently, and makes Ṣakhrah the sister of Ḥoṣayn. On hearing her inquiries Al Akhnas utters the verses. The names of the tribes are also given as Merâḥ and Jarm.

Loḳmân of wisdom.—Loḳmân the Wise, the contemporary of David, is to be distinguished from Loḳmân of 'Âd, though some-

times confounded with him even by Arabs. The two have been mentioned in a former note. Loḳmân the Wise is spoken of at Koran xxxi. 11. He was not a prophet, but he instructed his son An'am, or Ashkam, or Mâthân in the worship of the one true God. The descriptions of him by the Arabs have a great resemblance to those of Æsop. He is represented as a black, very ugly in person, and a slave, and it is probable that the traditions concerning Æsop were, like the fables, attributed to this mythical sage, unless, indeed, we hold the legends concerning Æsop to be themselves late inventions, and borrowed from the East.

Foes are vanquished.—Literally, "the forelocks are mastered." The Arabs, when they took prisoners, were accustomed to cut off the front hair and carry it in their quivers. Hence, at Koran xi. 59, "to take by the forelock" means, to have absolute authority. Nobles also are called the *forelocks*, or chiefs of the people.

Enriches the overseer—wearies the eye.—This use of ناظر in a double sense is to be found in the opening address of the Thirteenth.

Fraud would endure to the Day of Judgment.—This is an allusion to Koran lxiv. 9, where the Day of Judgment is called the "Day of Mutual Defrauding," since then men will defraud or supplant one another, the just taking the place that the wicked have had, and conversely.

The pen of accounting interprets.—تأوّل like تأويل is the expounding of the real essential meaning of a thing, that to which it *comes* or may be reduced.

An Abû Barâḳish.—This is a bird of gaudy and changing plumage, and is therefore used as a similitude for a clever but unsteady writer. M. de Sacy, in his Chrestomathie Arabe, Vol. III. p. 499, sec. ed., says that it is probably a species of heron. He then gives the following description from Ḳazwînî: "The Abû Barâḳish is a bird with a pleasant voice; its neck and feet are long, its beak red, and it is about the size of a stork; its plumage changes every instant to the eye, showing

red, yellow, green, and blue. So that a poet has said, 'He is like the Abû Barâḳish, he can take all colours.'" In Lane's Lexicon it is said to be a small wild bird, like a lark, which, when it is provoked, ruffles its feathers, and becomes variously changed in colour. The Abû Barâḳish is used figuratively, like the lizard Abû Ḳalamûn, to express a person of variable disposition: compare the Latin term *stellionatus*, a fraud or swindle, from *stellio*. A kind of shot silk also had these names from its changes of colour. Barâḳish is an ancient Arab name. In the proverb, "Barâḳish sins against her people" (Arab. Prov. II. 89), the name is variously explained as that of a bitch, which betrayed the place of a tribe's retreat by her barking; as the wife of a king who allowed her damsels needlessly and in jest to kindle the signal-fire for the assembling of the troops; and, thirdly, as a wife of Loḳmân of 'Âd who persuaded her husband to eat the flesh of the camel, so that by the voracity of himself and his people the camels of her own tribe were destroyed. This and numberless similar appellations of animals among the Arabs are of the nature of proper names, and may be compared with the Renard the Fox, Ysengrin the Wolf, Chantecler the Cock, of our medieval fables.

Save those that believe, etc.—Koran xxxviii. 23. آمَنَ is a word corresponding with أَسلَمَ, and signifies the making one's self secure and trustful in God. ما is augmentative to express indefiniteness or wonder.

After a time I recollected him.—Koran xii. 45. For the meanings of أُمَّة, see Lane. The various readings and interpretations given by Bayḍâwi at the above passage of the Koran cannot apply to xi. 11, where the meaning is clearly a certain *time*.

After whose fashioning.—Arab. Prov. I. 314. Compare Koran, xix. 28.

Whose sprite.—The place named عبقر was a residence of the Jinn, so that whoever does a thing wonderfully or beautifully is said to be 'Abḳarî, *i.e.*, a sprite of 'Abḳar. The Jinn were supposed to haunt desolate regions, particularly those which had been the home of wicked races of men destroyed by God. Such

was the region called Yabrîn, and the region called Wabâr, which lay between it and Yemen, and was named after Wabâr, son of Irem son of Shem. ʿAbḳar is said to have been in the region of Yemâmeh. The ʿAbḳar spoken of by Imr al Ḳays (Dîwân, p. 26 Ar. Text), seems to have no connection with the home of the Jinn. The poet compares the sound of the pebbles scattered by the hoofs of his camel to the sound of coin examined on a table in ʿAbḳar. The Arabs used the word Jinn to express the spirit or energy of a man: compare Ḥamâseh, p. 182, where a poet says, "My Jinn have not fled, my file is not blunted, my birds have not drooped from fear." In the commentary to this verse it is said that according to Abû ʿAla the Arabs compare an energetic man to a Jinnî or a Shayṭân. This and the foregoing expression are taken from a Tradition of the Prophet which is given by Sherîshi as follows;—Said the Prophet, "I saw in a dream is if I stood by a well, and looked at the people; then came Abû Bekr, and drew a bucket or two, and grew weak with it, and God forgave him; then came ʿOmar, and the bucket (ذنوب) turned into larger bucket (غرب) in his hand, and I never saw such an ʿAbḳarî among men, working as he worked, until the people were watered and at rest.

لم ار عبقريّاً من الرجال يفرى فريّه حتّى ضرب الناس باعطانهم

The original meaning of فرى is a *cut* or *stroke*, as you say of a strong man who severs a bar of wood with his sword, "No one can strike his stroke."

A heated eye—a ship's companionship.—The first of these expressions denotes anger, dislike, or contempt; the second is a modern phrase, meaning a short-lived acquaintance, such as is made during a voyage, and ceases at the end of it.

The sewer, the *latrina*.—For the various names of this place see what Sherîshi is pleased to call a pretty story, in De Sacy's commentary to the Forty-seventh Assembly. The original meaning is a *garden*. The metre of these verses is *kâmil*.

Drooped his eyelid over his mote. Was silent in shame and repentance.

THE TWENTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY.

The Ḳaṭa would not find its way.—It is related of the bird Ḳaṭa that it will leave its chicks at dawn and go to drink at a place a night's march off, and will return, bringing water to the chicks, in the forenoon; that again in the early afternoon it will fly to the place once more, returning to bring water a second time in the evening; in doing this it never loses its way to the nest.

The domain of the Khalifate.—The original meaning of حمى is a place of pasture or of water taken by some chief or powerful person, and prohibited to others. Thus Kolayb Wâ'il, the powerful chief of the Nejd, had his حمى in the district of Ḳaṣîm, and would allow no cattle to be pastured where the sound of his dog's bark could be heard (see note to Sixteenth Assembly). According to the authors cited in Lane's Lexicon, others did this: "It was a custom of the noble among the Arabs in the time of the Ignorance, when he alighted in a district that pleased him, to incite a dog to bark, and to prohibit for his own special friends or dependents the space throughout which the bark of the dog was heard, while he shared with the people in the other places of pasture around it. But the Prophet forbade this and said, 'There shall be no حمى except for God and his Apostle,' meaning except for the horses employed in war against the unbelievers, and the camels taken for the poor rate." In the present passage it signifies merely the Imperial domain or Court, that is, the city of Bagdad.

The Precinct.—حريم is an open space round a castle, in which horses are exercised and the public meet; or it may be a space round a city.

Sitting squarely. That is, he sat upon his buttocks with his legs equally crossed, which is a dignified position, as distinguished from جثى, he sat with his knees on the ground and his buttocks resting on his heels, or on the left foot bent sideways beneath, which is the position of those who argue together, as

the plaintiff and defendant in a suit; and also as distinguished from اقعى, he sat on his buttocks, leaning back, and having his feet on the ground and his knees raised.

Set his foot on high.—Set his كعب, or ankle, on high, so that the lowest part of him may be higher than the highest part of his companions. The word also has received the signification of honour by which a man is established and made firm, as on his ankle; thus it is said, "God exalt his ka'b," and "The ka'b of the tribe is gone," that is their fortune and reputation.

Made fruitful: fecundated by instruction, as the female palm tree is fecundated by the spadix of the male, which is bruised and sprinkled upon it, or "by the insertion of a stalk of a raceme of the male tree into the spathe of the female, after shaking off the pollen of the former upon the spadix of the female." (Lane on ابر). But according to Sherîshi it means "he drank the milk of my لِقحة," that is, "of my milch camel."

Broken the staff.—It was said of one who became a heretic or introduced discord that he "broke the staff of the Moslems," and *shukk al 'aṣa* became a synonym for schism. When one quarrelled with his tribe, and left it, he was said "to break its staff." Ḥarîri uses the phrase more literally here in the sense of injuring, since one is injured when his staff, which is his strength, is broken.

The white and yellow: silver and gold coin.

Did he flay, or transform, or copy.—Plagiarism, سَرِقة, forms a division of the Arabic rhetoric, since the critics have sought to lay down rules strictly defining how far it is admissible. A sufficient exposition of the subject is given in the Mukhtaṣar al Ma'âni (Calcutta, 1813), p. 651. M. Garcin de Tassy's translation of the Persian treatise *ḥadâ'iḳ al balâghah*, Paris, 1844, may also be advantageously consulted. In this and the following notes I have referred to the Mukhtaṣar, or shorter commentary, instead of the Muṭawwal, or longer commentary, of which I have a printed edition, because the former is more accessible, and quite sufficient for the purposes of the student. Plagiarism is divided into apparent and hidden; the former

being that which one will detect by having the two passages before him, the other that which conceals itself in an apparent variety of thought; or, as it is defined in the Mukhtaṣar, the apparent is that which borrows the whole meaning, whether it uses all the words of the original or not. When the entire passage is taken without a change, even in the disposition of the words, this is blameable, for it is pure stealing, and is called نسخ *copying*, or انتحال, the *arrogation* to one's self of another's verse. ʿAbdallâh ibn Az Zobayr did this with two verses of Maʿn ibn Ows, reciting them in the presence of Muʿâwiyeh; but before he had left the Khalif's presence, Maʿn came in and recited a ḳaṣîdeh of his composition, in which these very verses occurred. The Khalif turned to ʿAbdallâh and said, "Didst thou not say that they were thine?" upon which ʿAbdallâh was forced to make a weak excuse. If the plagiary change some or all of the words of a verse into words of corresponding meaning and measure, this is also blameable, being still pure stealing. This act, according to De Sacy's commentary, is called سلخ or flaying, and the same verse of Al Ḥaṭi'eh is quoted both in the commentary and in the Mukhtaṣar; but, as we shall see, the latter work gives the definition of "flaying" to the mere borrowing of the author's meaning, without any imitation of words. If then, according to the Mukhtaṣar, the plagiary uses corresponding words, or if he takes all the original author's words, merely changing their disposition, or if he takes some of his words, this is called اغارة, *making foray*, or مسخ *transformation*, a word used of metamorphosis into a lower form, as of a man into a beast. In the two latter cases it is not essentially blameable, and may be atoned for if the new verse be better than the old one. In the Mukhtaṣar there follow examples from the poems of Abû Temmâm, Al Boḥtori, and Al Mutenebbi. Finally, if the plagiary takes the meaning alone, this is اهام *occupation*, because he, as it were, comes and takes possession of the idea; or سلخ *flaying*, because he strips off the *skin* of diction which clothed the idea, and gives it a new one of his own. Similarly, this may be excusable or blameable, according as a better or

worse verse is produced. The species of borrowing called اقتباس, which consists in introducing phrases of the Koran or the Traditions, which are well known, is not blameable; nor is تضمين or the *insertion* of verses or hemistiches from other poets, if it be done honestly, and without an intention to claim them as one's own. I may here observe that نسخ and مسخ have a correspondence in meaning, which is shared by رسخ and فسخ. According to Sherîshi, the first means to change from lower to higher, the second from higher to lower, as the metamorphosis of a man into a beast; the third signifies the changing of an animal into an inanimate object, while the fourth is absolute corruption or wasting away. Of the verses quoted in De Sacy's commentary as an instance of سلخ, Fâris ash Shidyâḳ, who criticises the work very severely, says that the word at the end of the first line should be كاسى, and at the end of the second, لاسى from لسى, he ate voraciously. He is probably right, though in the Mukhtaṣar it is written لابس, as by De Sacy. See "La vie et les aventures de Fariak," p. 16 of last chapter. According to Sherîshi, the divisions of plagiarism mentioned by Ḥarîri are according to the system of Abû Moḥammed al Ḥosayn ibn Wakî', who wrote on the plagiarisms of Al Mutenebbi, and divided them into twenty classes, ten of which are excusable. These classes Sherîshi gives, with instances of each, but the matter is too long to be treated in these notes.

Poetry the register of the Arabs.—This was a saying of Ibn 'Abbâs, the cousin of the Prophet, and the greatest of the early expounders of the Koran. He was accustomed to quote passages of the ancient poets in support of his explanations, and to say, "When ye have a difficulty in the Koran, look for its solution to the poems, for these are the registers of the Arabs." It was also attributed to Mohammed, perhaps by the relation of Ibn 'Abbâs himself, who desired to maintain the study of poetry amid the early fanaticism of Islam. It is said, "God distinguished the Arabs by four things: they have turbans for crowns, and حبى, loops, (see 16th Assembly, 'they loosed their loops to me') for walls, that is as supports for their backs; and swords

for scarves, and poetry for their registers." This was said because they were in the habit of referring to poems when they differed about genealogies, wars, and the like.

Made foray.—Here Ḥarîri uses the technical term of the rhetoricians.

O thou who courtest.—These verses are of the second *ḍarb* of the first *ʿarûḍ* of the *kâmil*, which is مقطوع. The measure of the *ḍarb* is فَعَلاتن, since the last letter of the وتد مجموع is dropped, and the letter before it quiesces, so that the foot becomes مُتَفاعِلْ = فَعَلاتن. The part of each verse which the son is accused of appropriating forms a verse in which the *ʿarûḍ* is مجزوء, and the *ḍarb* معرّى, that is, of the normal متفاعلن, without any change from ترفيل or تذييل.

Turned the back of the shield: became hostile after being friendly. This expression is found again in the Fortieth Assembly.

To draw at the same source.—The word توارُد is used technically by the rhetoricians to signify the chance agreement of two poets in thought or words, when there has been no imitation of the first by the second. This and the following expression, "as the hoof oft falls on the hoof-print," are attributed to Al Mutenebbi, who, being reproached for borrowing from his predecessors said, "Poetry is a hippodrome and poets are steeds, and there may be a coincidence of thought, as the hoof oft falls on the hoof-print."

Verse-completing.—إجازة was in all times a favourite intellectual exercise of the Arabs, whose powers of improvisation were marvellous. It is when two poets contend by one reciting a verse which the other must follow with another of the same metre and rhyme, and with a continuous sense; the former then has to give a third, and so on, till it is shown which has the greater imagination and promptitude. Sometimes one uttered half a verse, which the other had to complete. Imr al Ḳays was accustomed to challenge those who claimed the reputation of poets to compete with him. Once he challenged Tow'am the Yeshkeri, and said to him, "If thou be a poet complete the

verses which I shall utter," and he began "Dost thou see the flash gleaming in the night?" Tow'am continued, "Like a Mage's fire it blazes a blaze." Imr al Ḳays: "I was wakeful to observe while slept Abû Shorayḥ." Tow'am: "As oft as I said 'It now ceases' it flashed abroad." Imr al Ḳays: "Its sound was as a murmur in a place unseen;" Tow'am, "Like the she-camels lowing wildly when they meet the herd." The poem is given in the Dîwân of Imr al Ḳays, p. 41, Arab. Text. When the poet found that he had an equal he bound himself by an oath never again to contend in poetry. ʿAḳîl ibn ʿUllafeh, a poet of Ḳoraysh, and a man in high esteem, since the Khalif Yezîd ibn ʿAbd al Melik married one of his daughters, amused himself on a journey by thus improvising verses with his son and daughter. He recited a verse, then his son followed it with another, and his daughter with a third, all being in the metre *ṭawîl*. Unfortunately one of his daughter's verses was as follows: "They were giddy, as though drowsiness had given them to drink of the wine Ṣarkhad, the dark red wine, that (when thou drinkest it) courses through back and feet." The father exclaimed, "By Allah, thou couldst never have so described it unless thou hadst drunk of it," and at once gave her a flogging. The son, indignant, shot at his father with an arrow, and left him wounded on the ground, taking away his sister. ʿAḳîl, however, was not displeased with his children's spirit, and uttered some verses in *rejez*, which contain a quotation from Abû Akhzam, a person who was treated in the same way by a son. See the proverb, "I know the disposition is from Akhzam." Ar. Prov. I., 658, and Forty-fourth Assembly. For the above story of ʿAḳîl see p. 646 of the Ḥamâseh, in which several of his verses are quoted. Al Farazdaḳ, the poet, also practised this kind of poetical exercise.

Tejnîs: paronomasia or alliteration. تجنيس or جناس signifies, literally, the use in a sentence of two or more words completely or partially conformable. It belongs to the third part of rhetoric, which is called the science of بديع, the first two parts being the science of معانى or significations, and the science of بيان or exposition. It would be useless to attempt here an

explanation of the various classes into which *tejnîs* is divided by the rhetoricians, who distinguish between the conformity of words which have a common root and the conformity of those which have not; between the conformity of words according as they do or do not belong to the same part of speech; between the conformity of two words and the conformity of one word with another and part of a third; between conformity of both sound and written character and conformity of sound alone; who, in short, have analysed the art and given names to its every variety. Those who desire to become acquainted with the subject will find it fully treated in the Mukhtaṣar, p. 621. The science of بديع, the third part of rhetoric, is concerned with the embellishment of discourse, and is divided into two parts, معنوىّ and لفظىّ; the first treating of antithesis, hyperbole, and the like; and the second having to do with words, and expounding not only all that may be included under the head of *paronomasia*, but all the artifices of rhyme and orthography of which examples may be found in Ḥarîri's work. See ردّ العجز على الصدر, Mukhtaṣar, p. 631; سجع, p. 637; موازنة, p. 642; قلب, p. 644; تشريع, that is the construction of a poem in which a part of each verse may be taken away, as in the present Assembly, p. 645. In the treatise translated by M. Garcin de Tassy mention is made of compositions with pointed or unpointed, with joined or disjoined letters. The Arabs have taken great pains to record all the instances of *tejnîs* which appear in the Koran. Most of these, however, are evidently spontaneous and unconscious, and are far from resembling the laboured artifices of subsequent generations. Among these may be cited xxvii. 22; xxx. 54, 55; c. 7, 8; civ. 1. The last is rather an instance of إتباع. The word بلاغة is used by the Governor in the general sense of *eloquence;* but in the technical language of the rhetoricians it signifies the first two divisions of the art of rhetoric, which have for their object the avoiding of error in bringing our conceptions to the minds of others. The treatise of Naṣîf al Yazaji, called 'Aḳd al Jumân, is a good compendium on this subject from its terseness and the clearness of its definitions.

Dark red of lip.—A dark red, verging on blackness, in the inner part of the lip was looked upon as beautiful by the Arabs.

The winning steed—the second in the course.—The horses in a race had epithets according to the order in which they arrived at the winning-post. In the Ḥamâseh, p. 46, Arab. Text, these names are given in two different ways. In one list the first horse is called *sâbiḳ* or *mujelli*, because he makes his owner illustrious or conspicuous; the second is called *muṣalli*, because his head is on the صلا of the preceding horse; the third, *muselli*, because he consoles his owner. The fourth is called *tâli*; the fifth, *murtâḳ*; the sixth, *ʿâṭif*; the seventh, *mu'ammal*; the eighth, *ḥaẓî*; the ninth, *laṭîm*, because he is driven away with buffets; and the tenth, *sukayt*. But, according to other authorities, seven out of the ten horses were entitled to a share of the prize, in analogy with the game of *maysir*; and, the names of the first three remaining as in the last list, the fourth was called *ʿâṭif*, the fifth *murtâḳ*, the sixth *ḥaẓî*, the seventh *mu'ammal*. The three horses which gained nothing were called *laṭîm*, *waghd*, and *sukayt*. Sherîshi ascribes to Al Aṣmaʿî the derivation of *muṣalli*, which has been given, and he relates that a man versed in the traditions of the Arabs explained the meanings of all the terms to the Khalif Muttaḳi. He also quotes some verses of Ibn al Anbâri, which unite all these epithets. They are the same as in the first list of the Ḥamâseh, except that *ḥaẓî* is placed before *mu'ammal*. Naṣîf al Yazaji has also united them in some verses of his sixth Assembly; but he makes the eighth horse *khaṭî*, probably a misprint. The list in De Sacy's commentary varies from these, and gives the name of *fiskil* to the last horse.

There is a ruddy-lipped one.—Metre *ṭawîl*. احوى represents the same quality as الما, the having a lip of a dark ruddiness, approaching to blackness. In some lines quoted at p. 425, De Sacy's ed., Al Boḥtori couples احوى and احور, "dark-lipped," and "having eyes of strongly contrasted black and white," as marks of beauty. Ṭarafeh (Moʿallaḳah, v. 6) says, "In the tribe is a dark-lipped one, like a fawn that browses on the fruit of the *arâk*, wearing two necklaces of the pearl and the topaz."

These lines, according to the Governor's desire, are full of plays on words and alliterations. In connection with this kind of composition the student is referred to the poem of Aṭ Ṭanṭarâni and De Sacy's notes thereon. Chrest. Arabe, Vol. II.

Gathers the dew of her mouth.—رشف is here a *maṣdar*, with the sense of *sucking* or *draining*. That the expression is not to be understood quite figuratively is shown by many passages of the Arab poets.

Like a pair of fire-staves in their case.—Ḥarîri uses this proverb merely to express resemblance between the two, but as commonly used it is not significant of praise, but of contempt. See Arab. Prov. I. 585, "A pair of fire-staves in a patched bag;" and II. 432, "There is nothing in his quiver but a pair of fire-staves;" used of weak and worthless persons. Another proverbial expression for complete equality or resemblance is, "Ye are as the two knees of the male camel," a saying uttered by Ḥarim ibn Ḳoṭbah, the Fezâri, when he was made judge in the *munâfarah* between ʿÂmir ibn Ṭofayl and ʿAlḳamat ibn ʿOlâtheh. See De Sacy's commentary to Twenty-sixth Assembly; also Arab. Prov. II. 861. The subject has been mentioned in a former note to this volume. The calling the father and son "a pair of fire-staves," may have reference to the often repeated metaphor of eliciting a spark, in the sense of producing an original idea.

Spends of what God has given him.—Koran lxv. 7.

Pardon thy brother.—Metre *kâmil*.

Threw me off.—زجر is literally to startle a bird, so that it flies away. The زاجر was one who took omens from the flight of birds, which he frightened by making a noise or throwing a stone.

The Day of Fear.—The day of death or resurrection.

Roha.—Ar Roha was the name given by the Arab conquerors to the city of Edessa, in northern Mesopotamia; a place which, under various names, has preserved its importance from the beginning of history to the present times. It is identified by some with Ur of the Chaldees; and tradition acribes its found-

Ex. b. 67

ation to Nimrod. Natural advantages, and particularly the large supply of water, marked it at an early period as a fit spot for settlement, and it may contend with Damascus for the honour of being the most ancient city in Western Asia. Under the Seleucidæ it was called Callirhoe or Antiochea. Its monarch Abgarus is associated with a well-known Christian legend. The position which it holds in the history of the early Christian Church, and of the Syriac language, needs only to be alluded to. At one time it is said to have had 300 monasteries. It was conquered by the Arabs in the first days of the Khalifate, and is said by Sherîshi to have received the name of Ar Roha from Roha ibn al Belendi ibn Mâlik, who settled there. It was captured during the first Crusade, and became a Christian principality under Baldwin, brother of Godfrey, who ruled it from 1097 to 1100, before he became king of Jerusalem. It was thus in Frankish hands at the time the Assemblies were composed, and there is a propriety in making Abû Zayd speak of it as a place of refuge. It was afterwards, under the reign of Joscelin II., captured by the Sultan 'Imâd ad Dîn, who committed frightful massacres. This calamity was the chief cause of the next Crusade. Yet in the time of Abû'l Faraj (Barhebræus) it still contained fifteen churches. It was taken and plundered by Tamerlane in his campaign against Bajazet. In the 17th century the Turks changed its name to Orfa, and it is now one of the most flourishing cities of the empire, having a population of 40,000 souls, and being the chief entrepôt for the trade between Kurdistan and the coast. Orfa contains a fine mosque, called the *jâmi'* of Abraham, and a little lake near the city is called the Pool of Abraham. The river Scirtus, on which Edessa was situated, is now called Daysan.

Sohayl and Soha meet.—Sohayl is the star Canopus. Soha is a star among the *Benât an Na'sh*. I think it is the little star which is close to the second of the three which form the tail of the Greater Bear. As Sohayl is used to figure something great and brilliant, so Soha is the example of that which is difficult to be discerned. Compare the verse in the Thirty-second

Assembly: "How many riddles, which were like Soha in obscurity, have become suns by my explaining." Also in Thirty-sixth, "We discerned both Soha and the moon;" that is, the obscure and the evident. To perceive this star was looked upon by the Arabs as the test of a good eyesight. The proverb, "I show her Soha, and she shows me the moon," Arab. Prov. I. 527, where it is no doubt wrongly quoted, was uttered by Ibn al Ghazz, the Ayâdi. There was in the time of the Ignorance a very tall and beautiful woman, who was of such great strength that she defied any man to ravish her, for she was a virgin. Ibn al Ghazz wagered with her a hundred camels that he would be able to accomplish this. When he assailed her she found him of irresistible strength, and by the time he had won the wager she was almost senseless. He said to her, "How is thy eye-sight; dost thou see Soha?" and she answered, in her confusion, "That is it," pointing to the moon. He said laughing, "I show her Soha, and she shows me the moon," which became proverbial. I have endeavoured, from the two legends related by Maydâni, to make a more reasonable explanation of the proverb.

Who lent him the suit (dast).—A poor play on words occurs in this sentence through the repetition of the word *dast*. Compare the verses at the end of the Eleventh Assembly.

Abû Kayd.—The Father of Deceit.

The Imâm.—The Khalif is thus called because he is the exemplar of the people or his subjects.

Equivocate, or *gloze.*—تأويل is "the turning a verse of the Koran from its apparent meaning to a meaning which it bears or admits, when the latter is agreeable with the Scripture and the Sunneh" (Lane). Sherîshi defines it as the making a promise inwardly in another sense from what the words express to the hearer, that is, making a mental reservation.

As Samuel kept it.—The Jew Samuel ibn ʿÂdiyâ is an exemplar of good faith among the Arabs, so that it is said, "More faithful than Samuel," Arab. Prov. II. 828. He was lord of a castle called Al Ablaḳ in Taymâ, a place on the south-western

border of the sandy desert which lies between the Jowf and Jebel Shammar. The act which has made his name famous was as follows: The prince poet Imr al Ḳays was brought by his feud with the Benû Asad, on whom he desired to avenge the death of his father Ḥojr, into the condition of an outlaw, خليع. Pursued by the agents of Munthir king of Hira, he took refuge among the Benû Ṭay; but when discord broke out among these on his account he left them and betook himself to a man of the Fazârah named ʿAmr son of Jâbir. This ʿAmr told him that the dwellers in tents could not protect him, but that if Imr al Ḳays desired he would conduct him to one who would give him a better protection than Cæsar. Imr al Ḳays accepted the offer, and his host gave him in charge to another Fazâri, who brought him to Samuel's castle of Al Ablaḳ. Here he was well received, and recited a poem which he had composed in honour of his protector. He dwelt with him some time, and Samuel gave him beasts with which to travel to Cæsar (the emperor Justinian), whose favour and aid against his enemies he had resolved to implore. Imr al Ḳays left in Samuel's keeping his daughter and all his property, of which the most valuable objects were five cuirasses, or breast-mails, having respectively the names Al Faḍfâḍah, "the large;" Aṣ Ṣâfiyeh, "the bright;" Al Muḥṣineh, "the protectress;" Al Khirrîḳ, "the goodly or excellent;" and Umm ath thuyûl, "the skirted;" that is, probably, having skirts of mail descending over the hips. Imr al Ḳays repaired to Constantinople, where he was well received by the Emperor. There is reason to believe that he is the person spoken of by Procopius and Nonnosus (Caussin de Perceval, Essai, Vol. II. p. 316). The rest of his life is but a legend. It is related in the Kitâb al Aghâni (see the extract in M'Guckin de Slane's Dîwân of Imr al Ḳays) that a certain Arab of the Benû Asad, whose brother had been slain by Imr al Ḳays, came to Constantinople, and calumniated the fugitive, whom the Kaysar had placed at the head of an army. He said that Imr al Ḳays was a debauched man, who had not only seduced the Emperor's daughter, but

had composed verses on the subject dishonourable to the Imperial House. On this the Emperor sent him a poisoned shirt, which, as soon as he put it on, began to consume him, so that his flesh fell from him. Hence he is called Thû 'l Ḳorûḥ, "the man with the ulcers." The intrigue with a Greek lady of high station is probable; and to it the poet is said to allude when he describes his entry into a married woman's chamber in the first poem of the Diwân, p. 20, Arab. Text. According to M. de Slane, the mistress of Imr al Ḳays was probably Arabia, the daughter of Justin II. It is certain, however, that Imr al Ḳays died at Ancyra; probably of some leprous disease, which gave rise to the legend. When his death was known, the Ghassâni prince Ḥârith resolved to possess himself of the cuirasses left in the charge of Samuel. He put himself at the head of his troops and summoned Samuel to give them up. The Jewish chief shut himself up in his castle and refused. But one day an infant son of Samuel, being with his nurse outside the castle, was seized by Ḥârith, who then summoned Samuel to a parley. Samuel appeared on the wall, and Ḥârith repeated his demand, with the threat that if it were not complied with he would put the child to death. Samuel asked time for consideration, and it was granted. He then called all his people to counsel, and they advised him to give up the property and save the child. But when he came again on the wall he said, "I cannot give up the cuirasses and break faith; do what thou wilt with the boy, for perfidy is a collar that never wears out; this boy will leave brothers behind him." Then Ḥârith killed the child before the father's eyes; but was forced after a time to give up the siege. When the season of the pilgrimage came Samuel took the cuirasses and delivered them to the heirs of Imr al Ḳays at the fair of 'Okâẓ. This Samuel was, like so many of the noble Arabs of that age, a poet, and to him are attributed some fine verses contained in the Ḥamâseh, p. 49. For other persons who are exemplars of faith-keeping among the Arabs, see Arab. Prov. II. 830 and following pages. One of these owes his reputation, like Samuel, to good faith towards the gifted and unhappy Imr

al Ḳays. This is Abû Ḥanbal aṭ Ṭâ'î, who, when his two wives solicited him, the one to give up, and the other to protect, the Prince, milked a two-year-old ewe, and, drinking the milk, exclaimed, "By God, I shall never break faith as long as this contents me." So that it is said, "More faith-keeping than Abû Ḥanbal."

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ASSEMBLY.

The portion of Ar Rabî'.—A large and populous quarter or suburb of Bagdad was known by the name of the Portion of Ar Rabî', because the ground had been given by Al Manṣûr to his *ḥâjib* or chamberlain, Abû 'l Faḍl ar Rabî' ibn Yûnus. The life of this personage, who enjoyed the greatest power during the reigns of his patron and of Al Mahdi, is to be found in Ibn Khallikân. He was of low origin, though something was known of his pedigree, since it was said that his ancestor, Abû Farwat al Ḥaffâr, had been a slave of the Khalif 'Othmân ibn 'Affân, and, having received his freedom, had become a grave-digger, whence his surname. Ibn Khallikân relates that "Ar Rabî' died towards the beginning of the year 170 (A.D. 786), but Aṭ Ṭabari places his death in 169. Some say that he was poisoned by the Khalif Al Hâdi." Ar Rabî' was an able but unscrupulous man. There is reason to believe that he was concerned in the death of Al Manṣûr's nephew, 'Abd al Wahhâb, whose rivalry the Khalif feared for his own son Mahdi. Under Mahdi's reign Ar Rabî showed himself a military commander of ability in Asia Minor, but his treachery towards the wazîr Abû 'Abd allah, whose destruction he accomplished by persuading the Khalif that the wazîr had brought up his son Moḥammed as a *zindîḳ*, or free-thinker, shows him to have been capable of the worst means to gain his ends. For a full account of him, see Weil, *Geschichte der Chalifen.*

The two boon-companions of Jathîmeh.—This was Jathîmet al Abrash, son of Mâlik the Azdi, the famous king of the Arabs of Irak, and celebrated for his pride and grandeur in the popular legends. It was the custom of the Arabs to associate by threes in their feastings, so that each man had two boon-companions. But such was the pride of Jathîmeh that he would drink with none of mortal race; but declared that the Farḳadân alone should be his boon-companions; and to these stars cups were filled whenever the king caroused, and the liquor was poured out as if they had indeed drunk. But it came to pass at last that the king's nephew 'Amr ibn 'Adî was lost in the *Semâweh*, or Syrian desert. This 'Amr was son of 'Adî ibn Naṣr and Raḳâsh the king's sister, whose adventure has been mentioned in the Introduction. It will be remembered that 'Adî, a youth of princely blood, was one of the king's pages, and that he and Raḳâsh having mutually fallen in love, she had persuaded him to ask the king's consent after he had well drunken, and then to consummate the marriage at once. 'Adî the next day found Jathîmeh so angry at what had passed, that he sought safety in flight. Raḳâsh gave birth to a son whom Jathîmeh adopted, since he was himself childless. The boy 'Amr used to go out with the king's servants to gather mushrooms, and it happened that whenever the servants found fine mushrooms they ate them, and brought back only the worse kind to the king. But 'Amr brought back the best he could find, and one day in presenting them he uttered this verse:—

These are my gathering, and they are the best, though truly every gatherer has his hand to his mouth.

These last words became proverbial. At last 'Amr, who was eight years old, was lost in the desert. Some say that he was carried off by Jinn, by whom he was enchanted a long time. At last two brothers, named Mâlik and 'Oḳayl, the sons of Ḳârij, men of Balḳayn, who were journeying to the king with presents, met a young man with his hair and nails grown long. They said to him, "Who art thou?" He said, "A son of the Tanûkhîyeh." (Jathîmeh reigned over the Tanûkhites of

Ḳoḍâ'ah, who had founded the city of Ḥira, under Mâlik ibn Zohayr). The adventure which followed is not worth relating; it will be found at Arab. Prov. II. 319, and in De Sacy's commentary to the Thirty-ninth Assembly. In the end they brought him to the king, who offered them whatever reward they chose to ask. They asked that Jathîmeh should take them as his boon-companions as long as he lived. The king consented, and the three dwelt together for forty years, until death separated them. 'Amr was called 'Amr of the Collar, for when he was brought back his mother left on him the collar he had worn in infancy, on which Jathîmeh said, "'Amr has outgrown the Collar," which became proverbial in speaking of a thing that is no longer fitting. This phrase, "the guests of Jathîmeh," is taken by Ḥarîri from some verses of Mutemmim, son of Nuwayrah, on his brother Mâlik, who, having espoused the cause of the prophetess Sajâḥ, at the head of the tribe of Yarbû', was cruelly put to death by order of Khâlid ibn Al Welîd. For this passage in early Moslem history, see the commentary to some verses of Mutemmim, p. 370 of Ḥamâseh. It is to this Mâlik that people allude when they say, "A man, but not like Mâlik:" Arab. Prov. II. 213.

Assumed its gilding and adorned itself.—These words are from Koran x. 25. ازّيّنت is explained to be primitively تزيّنت, by an *idghâm* of frequent occurrence in the Koran. But it is also read أزينَت with the ى treated as a sound letter, and ازيانّت like ابياضّت.

The headstrong ruddy wine.—كُميت is an epithet of a horse, meaning "of a dark bay colour." The word شموس, therefore, is fitly coupled with it. For the former word compare Mo'allaḳah of Ṭarafeh, v. 59: "Of the things that I love one is to be beforehand with the women who would blame me, and to drink the *dark-red* wine, that foams when thou mix it with water."

There intruded on us.—At the proverb, "More intrusive than Ṭofayl," Arab. Prov. II. 838, Maydâni remarks that the Arabs of the desert called him who came unbidden to eat وارش,

and him who came unbidden to drink واغل ; but that the people of towns called the former also واغل. Ḥarîri, however, uses the word here in its legitimate meaning, since the party were engaged in drinking.

How long, Su'âd.—The metre of these lines is وافر, which is a metre of the second circle, or دائرة المؤتلف, so called because the feet of all the metres it contains are seven-lettered. The two metres of this circle which are in use are the *wâfir* and *kâmil*. which differ only by the respective positions of the two component parts of the foot, the *wâfir* having the radical foot مُفاعلتن, made up of a وتد مجموع, followed by a فاصلة صغرى, while the *kâmil* has the derivative foot مُتفاعلن, in which the order is reversed. The normal measure of the *wâfir* is مُفاعلتن, three times in each hemistich, but this is seldom used. The measure of the present verses belongs to the first عروض, which is مقطوفة, and which has one ضرب similar to itself. The علّة called قطف consists in the dropping the سبب خفيف at the end of a foot, and quiescing the moved letter before the سبب, so that مُفاعلتن becomes مفاعلْ = فعولن, which forms the last foot of each hemistich. Of the زحاف there enters most frequently into this metre عصب, which is the quiescing of the fifth moved letter of the foot, by which مُفاعلتن becomes مفاعيلن. Examples of this will be found in the verses. There also enters عقل, which is the dropping the fifth moved letter, so that مفاعلتن becomes مفاعلن. Another of these licenses, نقص, which is a زحاف مزدوج, made up of عصب and كفّ, is less common.

Su'âd is a name applied by the Arabs to a cruel and capricious beauty: see a note to the Introduction. As the metre shows, it is imperfectly declined, the reason being that it unites the qualities of a proper name and of femininess, and consists of more than three letters: see Alfîyeh of Ibn Mâlik, v. 664 and commentary.

As she drinks to me.—Compare the address of Abû Odayneh to Al Aswad ibn Al Munthir, inciting him to slay the prisoners taken from Ghassân, v. 3. Schultens, *Mon. Vetust. Arabiæ*, p. 58.

Why he naṣbed the first وصل.—Ḥarîri has, perhaps, taken the

idea of this Assembly from an anecdote related of Abû ʿOthmân al Mâzini, the grammarian. One day a slave girl happened to sing in the presence of the Khalif Al Wâthiḳ a verse, in which it was doubtful whether a certain word should be made *marfûʿ* or *manṣûb*. A discussion arose among the guests ; but the girl declared that she had the authority of Abû ʿOthmân for the accusative case. The Khalif then sent for Abû ʿOthmân, and asked, somewhat contemptuously, of what family he was. The grammarian replied, "Of the Benû Mâzin." "Of which Mâzin?" said the Khalif; "Is it of Rabîʿah, or Temîm, or Kays?" "Of Rabîʿah" was the reply. Then the Khalif, knowing that a peculiarity of this tribe was to substitute B for M, and M for B in pronunciation, asked Abû ʿOthmân jocularly, "بِا آسمكَ," "What is thy name?" Now Abû ʿOthmân's name was Bekr, and if he had answered according to the pronunciation with which the Khalif credited him, he would have uttered the offensive word "Mekr," which means *deceit*, and have furthermore declared that it was his name, so he replied in a marked manner "Bekr." The Khalif, perceiving his readiness, was much pleased, and repeating to him the verse asked him his opinion. He answered that the word must be *manṣûb*, and supported his decision by satisfactory arguments. In the end the Khalif dismissed him with a present of one thousand denars. *Ibn Khallikân;* life of Abû ʿOthmân. This anecdote is also related by Ḥarîri in the Durrah.

Sîbawayh.—Ibn Khaldûn observes in the Muḳaddimeh fî 't târîkh, that most of the Moslems learned in the law and in science were of foreign origin, and not of Arab race; though the Koran, the foundation of all, was an Arab book. Sîbawayh was one of the most eminent of these strangers, who, prizing the knowledge of the Arab language, law, and religion, above all that their own countries had produced, devoted themselves to the learning that had its origin in the schools of Basra and Kufa. He was a Persian by birth, and his full name was ʿAmr ibn ʿOthmân ibn Ḳanbar; the name Sîbawayh being a *laḳab*, or surname, which he received. For the meaning of this appella-

tion, see Ibn Khallikân, who gives his life; and for its form, *Anthol. Gram. Arabe*, p. 151. He was a *mowla* to the Benû 'l Ḥârith ibn Ka'b. According to the tradition concerning him adopted by Sherîshi, he was born at Bayḍâ, near Shiraz. He early came to Basra to study, and joined the class of Ḥammâd ibn Selemeh, who had also instructed Al Aṣma'î (see the latter's life in Ibn Khallikân). Sîbawayh employed himself in copying out Traditions; and it would appear that at this early period of his life he plunged into the controversy respecting *raf'* and *naṣb*; for it is related that while writing from dictation some words of the Prophet, "There is not one of my companions ليس ابا الدرداء," Sîbawayh said that it should be ابو الدرداء, since ابو was the اسم of ليس. "No," said Ḥammâd, "you are wrong, for this is only the ليس of exception." He then left Ḥammâd to obtain more perfect instruction, and attached himself to Al Khalîl ibn Aḥmed. He also studied under 'Îsa ibn 'Omar, and in the life of the latter, by Ibn Khallikân, it is said that Sîbawayh's celebrated work, called preeminently the Kitâb, was founded upon 'Îsa's work called جامع النحو. Sîbawayh, according to this account, interpolated observations of Al Khalîl into 'Îsa's book, and, adding his own remarks, produced the celebrated compilation which was afterwords looked upon as the standard work on Arabic Grammar. See also Anthol. Gram. Arabe., p. 381, note 1. Among his masters were also Yûnus ibn Ḥabîb and Abû 'l Khaṭṭâb, known under the name of Al Akhfash the Elder. The discussion concerning the *raf'* and *naṣb*, which took place before Ar Reshîd, and the treachery of the Kufian grammarian, Al Kisâ'î, and his pupil Al Amîn, son of Hârûn, have been already noticed in the Introduction. The anecdote is given by numerous writers. It is related by Sherîshi that when Sîbawayh left the Khalif's presence in despair he met his friend Al Akhfash the Younger, to whom he was in the habit of submitting his writings before publication, and told him what had occurred. Al Akhfash, indignant, at once sought out Al Kisâ'î, and put to him a hundred grammatical questions, accusing him of a mistake in

every answer. On this Al Kisâ'î asked him if he were Al Akhfash, and, on his answering in the affirmative, requested him to undertake the education of his children, to which Al Akhfash consented. He made the Kufian acquainted with Sîbawayh's book, and in the end Al Kisâ'î repented deeply of the artifice which had caused Sîbawayh's death. When near his end he exclaimed to Ar Reshîd, "Commander of the Faithful, impose on me the *diyeh* (the fine for involuntary homicide), for I fear I have had a share in killing Sîbawayh." The year and place of the death of Sîbawayh are both disputed. According to a legend given by Sherîshi, he would not return to Basra discredited after quitting Bagdad, but repaired to Ahwâz, and there made inquiry if there were any prince with a fondness for grammar. He was recommended to Ṭalḥat ibn Ṭâhir of Khorasan, and set out for his court, but was taken ill at Sâweh and died. Some valuable extracts from the Kitâb have been published by De Sacy in his *Anthologie*. The work appears to have been early used as a text book. In the life of Abû 'Othmân al Mâzini, who has been spoken of above, it is related that he refused to teach the Book of Sîbawayh to a *thimmî* or non-Moslem, although offered a hundred denars; also that another person having gone through the Book, exclaimed, "God reward thee, I have not understood a word of it."

I will announce to you its interpretation.—The words of the butler to Pharaoh before he departs to question Joseph concerning the king's dream. Koran xii. 45.

Call to me "Come down."—نزال belongs to the class called اسماء الافعال. Words of the form فَعال, with the sense of the imperative, may be formed from triliteral verbs, and are indeclinable on the *kesr*. Alfîyeh, vv. 595 and 627. The word "Nizâl" was a challenge to alight and fight on foot.

What is the word?—The grammatical notes suggested by this Assembly will be found appended to the author's Explanation.

If ye return I return.—These words are from the Koran: "If ye (the unbelievers) return to the fight we (God) will return," viii. 19. In the Koran the *mudâri' mejzûm* is used, but after إن as

a conditional particle the *mâḍi* has the same future signification. Extract from Zamakhshari, Anth. Gramm. Arabe, p. 113, Arab. Text.

We changed from weariness.—The varying of the preposition, as in this sentence, is a favourite artifice of the author. It has been imitated in the translation.

Unless every hand endow me: خوّل signifies "he caused him to possess خَوَل gifts;" it is used with a double *mef'ûl.* Koran vi. 94, and xxxix. 11.

The light of proof.—At Koran iv. 174, it is said, "O people, a proof has come to you from your Lord, and we have sent down to you a clear light."

We were astonished, etc.—These words give an instance of the *tejnîs* called المركّب المرفوّ, which is when one of the two words between which the *tejnîs* subsists is shorter than the other, and you make the correspondence complete by adding to the shorter a part or the whole of the word next to it. See De Sacy's commentary to the Twenty-third Assembly, at word *tejnîs,* and Mukhtaṣar, p. 624.

Need is not courtesy.—حفاوة is the showing honour to one by appearing glad at meeting him, and enquiring concerning his condition. This saying is to be found at Arab. Prov. II. 690. It is used when one shows kindness for a purpose or necessity of his own, and not out of disinterested courtesy.

Lights up my morning.—According to Sherîshi there is a double meaning in the word إصباح, which also signifies "redness of the hair," used by the author like "blackness" to typify youth. The colour صُحبة, according to the Ḳâmûs (cited by Freytag), is akin to صُهبة, that is the colour of white mixed with red, which was the colour attributed by the Arabs to the hair of their Christian enemies. If this be so the verse in the text may be also rendered "whitens my fair hair."

I swear that.—لا after a formula of swearing is often followed by the *mâḍi* in a future sense: compare the Fifth Assembly, "I will not taste of your meal."

Deck itself.—Compare the Forty-sixth Assembly (the first

set of verses), "Who has not decked or clothed his palms with the cup of wine."

Mixed drink.—Compare Mo'allakah of 'Amr ibn Kulthûm, v.2.

Cooled of the north wind.—I have translated thus on the authority of the commentary to v. 32 of the Mo'allakah of Lebîd. Compare the Burdeh of Ka'b ibn Zohayr, v. 4.

Gray hair is a guest to whom honour is due.—The meaning is that if he did not behave with sobriety in his old age he would not be treating his own gray hair with respect, and that, consequently, those who prided themselves on receiving their guests with courtesy would blame and contemn him.

EXPLANATION.

The first and best . . . . If his work be good, then his reward is good; and if his work be evil, then his reward is evil.—In this case the first خير is *manṣûb* through being the خبر of كان. It is almost needless to remind the student that كان and its related verbs (اخواتُها) such as ظلّ, بات, اضحى, دام preceded by ما, and others, make the مُبتَدا *marfû'* as their اسم, and the خبر *manṣûb*; thus differing from the substantive verbs in Latin and in the languages influenced by Latin grammar. The idiom is as if it should be said in Latin, "Caius est bonum virum." Alfîyeh, v. 143. The converse is the case with إنّ and its sisters, where the idiom is, "Sanè Caium, vir bonus." In the first part of the sentence عملُهُ is the اسم of كان, and خيراً is the خبر; the former is *marfû'*, the latter *manṣûb*, in accordance with this principle. As to the second خير it is said that it is *marfû'* as the خبر of an elided inchoative, مُبتَدا, the full proposition being فجزآؤُهُ خيرٌ. This last is called a جُملة اسميّة, or nominal proposition, of which the property is that the خبر shall agree in إعراب with the مُبتَدا, or in other words, be put in the same case with it. It is then said by the author that كان and its noun are elided because the conditional particle إن points to their virtual presence or influence. For this see Alfîyeh, v. 155, where it is said that كان and its *ism* are elided after إن and لو, while the *khabar* remains; as in the verse uttered by No'mân ibn al Munthir to Rabî' ibn

Ziyâd, when the latter, who was his boon-companion, was accused before him in satirical verse by the poet Lebîd of being leprous, in revenge for the ill-will which Rabî' had instilled into the king towards the Benû Ja'far.

قد قيل ما قيل إن صِدقا وإن كذبًا

It is also said that the inchoative is elided because the ف, which is the answer to the condition, points to it; since an inchoative generally follows ف. Grammarians explain the many abrupt forms of Arabic speech, and the anomalies of the *i'râb* by the supposed elision, حذف, of the *mubtada* or *khabar*, or both together, and display wonderful ingenuity and power of analysis in thus accounting for idioms which arose among a simple unlettered race, which sought only to express its thoughts as vigorously and emphatically as possible. On this subject consult Alfîyeh, 136th and following verses; Naṣîf's Grammar, chapter on الحذف والتقدير, p. 71. Whenever anything is elided, there should be, if the speech is to be intelligible, a دليل, that is, something which shows or points to the nature and meaning of what is elided; in this case the elision is called اختصار, abbreviation; but otherwise it is called اقتصار. Thus, in the text the author speaks of the دلالة of إنّ and of ف. To find the دلالة the grammarians sometimes resort to fanciful artifices. With respect to ف, which is called جواب الشرط, it is naturally followed by a *mubtada*; since it is a disjoining particle, and must commence a new proposition, either fully or elliptically expressed. Such a proposition has what the grammarians call a place in the *i'râb*, جُملة لها محلّ من الإعراب, which is the place of *jezm*, since in such a phrase as إنْ تفعلْ افعلْ the verb is *mejzûm*. See extract from Ibn Hishâm; Anthol. Gramm. Arabe, p. 74, Arab. Text, and De Sacy's Grammar, Vol. II. paragraph 1179. The *mubtada* is commonly elided after ف, as in Koran xli. 46, مَن عَمِلَ صالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ, that is, مَن عَمِلَ صالِحًا فعَمَلُه لِنَفْسِه.

The second mode is that you should naṣb both.—In this case the *naṣb* of the first خبر requires no further explanation than has been given in the former case. The مفعول or مفعول به, that is,

the object of the verb's action, is, according to the Arab grammarians, not only the objective complement of the active verb, as ʿAmr in the sentence "Zayd beat ʿAmr," but also that of the passive verb, either absolutely, مُطلَقًا, as the word "beating" in the sentence "Zayd was beaten a beating," or otherwise, as "denar" in the sentence, "Zayd was given a denar." It would also be, I think, allowable to describe the second خير in this case as *manṣûb* by تَمييز or specification; since it contains the signification of مِن and explains what goes before, as غَرَسْتُ الارضَ شجرًا. See Alfîyeh, v. 356.

The third mode is that you should rafʿ both.—In this case the first خير is the *ism*, and فى عَمَلِه the *khabar* of كان, the latter being virtually *manṣûb*. The second خير is *marfûʿ*, as in the first case, as the *khabar* of the elided *mubtada*. On this agreement in the *iʿrâb* between the *mubtada* and the *khabar* in a proposition, there are various explanations among the grammarians. Ibn Mâlik's verse on the subject is, "Make the *mubtada* to be *marfûʿ* by its *ibtidâ* (or because it commences the sentence), and make the *khabar* to be *marfûʿ* by the *mubtada*. Ibn ʿAḳîl then says that the teaching of Sîbawayh and the generality of the Basrians was thus; and that they declared the regent, عامل, on the *mubtada* to be logical, معنوىّ, in that the noun was without any verbal regent except in a certain exceptional case, which it is needless to dwell on here. On the other hand, the regent on the *khabar* is verbal and consists of the *mubtada*. But the teaching of others is that the regent on both the *mubtada* and the *khabar* is the *ibtidâ*, and with respect to both it is logical. Another opinion is that the *mubtada* is *marfûʿ* by the *ibtidâ*, and the *khabar* is *marfûʿ* both by the *ibtidâ* and the *mubtada*. It is also said that there is reciprocity between them, and that each makes the other *marfûʿ*. The correct opinion is held to be that of Sîbawayh.

And it may be that the first خير *is rafʿed through being the agent of* كان; *and that the* كان *which receives a virtual power here is the complete attributive verb.*—The class of verbs known as "كان and its sisters," are called ناقصة, "incomplete verbs,"

because they do not, like other verbs, contain an attribute. But كان and صار may be used as attributive verbs with the signification "to exist," and then they do not require a *khabar*. This will be easily understood from the text. Thus in English we may say, "God is," in the sense of "God exists;" and in that case "is" requires no word after it to give a complete sense.

The fourth and weakest mode.—This requires no explanation.

As for the noun that alternates.—This and the following riddle bring us to one of the most important and difficult questions connected with Arabic grammar; a question not suggested by the ingenuity of scholars, but one which every beginner must attempt to understand, and which yet remains insoluble by the greatest masters of the language. It is the double form of declension of Arabic nouns, which, according to our terminology, are divided into triptots and diptots; the latter having an incomplete *i'râb* without *tanwîn*, and being *mejrûr* with the *fetḥah* instead of the *kesreh*. It is possible that this strange diversity, for which all the theories of grammarians give no satisfactory explanation, may have arisen from the fusion or mutual action of two great dialects, one diptotic, the other triptotic in its declensions. Even at the present day the incomplete declension prevails over a great part of Arabia (Palgrave, I., p. 464). But accepting, as a commentator of Ḥarîri is bound to do, the principles of the grammarians, I must dismiss such scientific considerations, and treat the subject in the traditional manner. It is well worthy of attention, since it is frequently discussed by native authors, and yet has received insufficient notice, or no notice at all, from the European compilers of grammars.

Two kinds of declension are, according to the Arabic grammarians, to be found in the language; the one that proper to the noun, the other that proper to the verb. The noun is declined with the *tanwîn*, the *ḍamm*, the *feṭḥ*, and the *kesr*; the verb with the *ḍamm*, the *feṭḥ*, and the *jezm*. Thus the *tanwîn* and the *kesr* are proper to the noun, and the *jezm* is proper to the verb. If then a noun be declined without the *tanwîn* and the *kesr*, but with the *ḍamm* and *feṭḥ* only, its declension is assimilated

to that of the verb. Such is the case with the class of nouns which we are considering. If the noun be fully declinable, that is with the *tanwîn* and *kesr*, it is called مُتَمَكِّنٌ امكَنُ, because it possesses its full nominality, تمكُّنٌ في الاسميّة, in form as well as meaning. If it be not fully declinable it is called مُتَمَكِّنٌ غَيرُ امكنَ, because it does not possess all the characteristics of a noun in form, but is assimilated to the character of a verb. Now, according to all grammarians, the noun is fundamental, or primitive, and the verb is derivative, or secondary. This فرعيّة of the verb is two-fold; firstly, logical, معنويّة, inasmuch as the noun gives a perfect sense in itself, while the verb requires a noun to be joined to it; secondly, لفظيّة, formal or etymological. The schools of Basra and Kufa agree as to the former cause of the verb's secondariness, but differ as to the latter. The Basrians say that the verb is derived from the noun, that is from the *maṣdar*, supporting their opinion partly on logical grounds, since they say that the notion of *running* or *eating* must precede the notion *he ran*, or *he ate*, and partly on actual linguistic experience, since there are numbers of verbs which have evidently been formed from nouns expressing even material objects, as in English we say "to steam," "to sail," "to post a letter." This they give as the cause of the verb's formal secondariness. The Kufians, on the other hand, deny the derivation of the verb from the noun, and make the third person of the preterite the root. But they equally admit the formal secondariness of the verb, which they say consists in *terkîb* or *composition*, since any part of the verb expresses a notion compounded of the idea of the verb and a subject, while the noun expresses only a simple notion, and as the compounded is secondary to the simple, therefore the verb is formally secondary to the noun. It is somewhat difficult to distinguish this formal secondariness from the logical secondariness. But the distinction will be perceived if we consider the logical secondariness to consist in the dependence of the abstract verb on a noun (or pronoun), for a complete meaning, and the formal secondariness to consist in the actual

presence, real or implied, of a ضمير, or pronoun, in every part of the verb. It must be remembered that in each tense and person the ضمير is supposed to exist, either بارز, *apparent*, or مُستَتِر, *hidden*. Thus, in كَتَبَ, and يكتبُ the *ḍamîr* is hidden; so, also, it is hidden in كَتَبَتْ and تكتُبُ, the *tâ* in both cases being the mark of the feminine: in some other cases it is expressed. Hence the Kufians might argue that a verb actually uttered in language inevitably contained a compounded signification. By the consent of all, then, the verb has two kinds of secondariness, the one logical, the other formal or in regard of utterance.

Now the principle of the grammarians is that the nouns which have the imperfect declension have it because they correspond to the verb in these two respects; that is, they combine the two defects of logical and formal secondariness. Thus a noun to be imperfectly declined must have two defects, one of the logical and one of the formal kind; for if both be logical, or both be formal, it is not imperfectly declined. These defects are nine in number: الوصف, the quality of description or of being an adjective; تعريف العَلَم, determination as a proper name; العدل, deviation of form in a word, while its meaning remains the same, as when عامِرٌ is turned into عُمَرُ; التركيب, composition; العَجمَة, the quality of being a foreign word; الجمع, the plural number; التأنيث, the being feminine; وزن الفعل, the form of the verb; and الالف والنون الزائدتان, that is, the addition of ان to the root, as in سكران, drunken. Some writers add five more, making up the number to fourteen; but these last are useless refinements. These nine qualities give the noun a character of secondariness, since the adjective is secondary to the substantive, the determinate noun to the indeterminate, the deviate to the original form, the compounded to the simple, the foreign to the Arab, the plural to the singular, the feminine to the masculine, the form of the verb to the form of the noun, the augmented word to the unaugmented. Now, it has been said that the noun, to be imperfectly declined, must

have two of these defects, and, moreover, one of them must be logical and the other formal. The logical defects are the first two—the quality of an adjective, and the quality of a proper name; the other defects are formal, that is, affect the form or utterance of the words themselves. Hence one of the first two defects must be united with one of the last seven to make the noun imperfectly declined. This, according to the grammarians, is consistent with reason, inasmuch as the first, namely, the quality of description, represents the adjective, and the second, the proper name, represents the substantive; and so, between them, all nouns are represented. These two are, therefore, the "pillars" to which the others are united. Each one of the two may be combined with the *deviation*, or the *form of the verb*, or the *augmentation*. But the proper name alone can be combined with the *foreign word*, or the *compounded*, or the *tâ of the feminine*, so as to produce imperfect declinability. In this brief space only principles can be enunciated; the full meaning of these distinctions can only be understood from the explanations and examples of Arabic writers.

There are two cases, however, in which one defect is counted as two. The first concerns the defect of *femininity*, in the case of a word ending with the *elif* of the feminine. The class of words which are thus made imperfectly declinable will be found by a reference to any grammar. The reason for the double power of *femininity* in this case is that the *elif* of the feminine adheres continually to such words as if it were part of the root, which is not the case with the *tâ* of the feminine, which only attaches inseparably to proper names, except in some rare cases. Thus, in the case of these nouns it is held that the *elif* of the feminine gives them the formal defect of femininity, while the feminine essentiality which they derive from the presence of this *elif*, as a radical, gives them a logical femininity. They have, therefore, both formal and logical secondariness, and are, consequently, imperfectly declined.

The second concerns the defect of the *quality of the plural*, and affects those plurals which belong to what are called the last

forms of the broken plurals, which are diverse from the form of any singular. These are plurals of the form شوابّ, or دَراهِمُ, or دَنانيرُ, where the first letter is *meftûḥ*, and the third letter is *elif*, followed by a letter with *teshdîd*, or by two moved letters, either juxtaposed or divided by a quiescent letter. There are no singulars of these forms in the Arabic language, and the double secondariness consists in conveying the *notion of plurality*, which is a logical defect, and in diverging from the form of the singular, which is a formal defect. The two defects, one logical and the other formal, being combined, such plurals are imperfectly declined.

Ḥarîri does not mention in his *tefsîr* that the first letter of such a plural should be *meftûḥ*, and the same condition is omitted by other grammarians, since it always co-exists with the others mentioned; but it is logically necessary to state it, since there is a form of the singular with the first letter *maḍmûm*, as the word عُذافرُ. Al Ashmûni; Bulak edition, Part II. p. 461.

Certain grammarians hold that plurals of these forms are imperfectly declined because they are really or by supposition plurals of plurals; for the repeated plurals have these forms. Thus, ضِلع makes أضلاع and أضالِع, and ظفر makes أظفار and أظافير; and plurals of the form دراهم and دنانير are held to correspond to these. According to this theory the logical secondariness would consist in the quality of plurality, and the formal secondariness would consist in the assumption of the form of the *mukarrar* or repeated plural; real in the first instance, and by supposition in the second. Other explanations are given of less plausibility. The opinion that one of the causes of imperfect declinability is the divergence from the forms of the singular is the teaching of Abû ʿAli, and has been generally adopted. The answers to the objections to it are given by Al Ashmûni, Part II. p. 463. On this subject see also Alfîyeh, and the grammar of Naṣîf; as well as Anthol. Gram. Arabe, p. 95 Ar. text. The sense in which the words

مُلازِم, ثِقَل, and مُعتقل, as applied to this declension, are to be taken will be sufficiently understood from the above.

Some say that this is a singular form.—In the Seventh Assembly Ḥarîri uses the singular form سروال; the contrary opinion appears to rest on a Tradition of the Prophet, who said to his followers, اتخذوا السراويلات (p. 78 De Sacy's edition). Ibn Mâlik treats سراويل as a singular having the form of a plural, and therefore imperfectly declinable. Others think that either declension is lawful. Alfîyeh, v. 660. Similar words are حَضاجِر, a name for the hyena, and شراجيل, a man's name.

As for the ء which when it attaches itself.—This requires little explanation. As the formal secondariness which is necessary to the imperfect declension arises from divergence from a singular form, the addition of the ء, which gives the plural a singular form, takes away this condition, and makes the declension perfect. Alfîyeh, v. 658.

As for the س *which deposes the regent.*—The particle أن is of two kinds. Firstly, مصدري, that is, "forming a proposition equivalent to the *masdar*;" in this case it combines with the *mudâri'*, which it causes to be *mansûb*; thus: أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَقُومَ, *I desire that thou stand*, is equivalent to أُرِيدُ قِيامَكَ, *I desire thy standing*. So in Koran ii. 180, وأَنْ تصوموا خيرٌ لكم, *And that ye fast is better for you*, is equivalent to "your fasting." In this case أَنْ is an عامل, regent, and *nasbs* the verb. But أَنْ may also be considered a contraction of أَنَّ, in which case it is called مُخَفَّفَة من الثقيلة, because the original form is *lightened* by taking away the *teshdîd*. أَنَّ is one of the sisters of إِنَّ, and not distinguished from it by Sîbawayh, who is of opinion that the former is originally إِنَّ. The property of إِنَّ and its sisters is that they annul (نسخ) the *mubtada*, their action being the reverse of كان and its sisters; for whereas the latter make their *ism marfû'* and their *khabar mansûb*, the former make their *ism mansûb* and their *khabar marfû'*, as إِنَّ زيدًا قائمٌ. These particles are considered to partake of the nature of the verb, and are therefore called particles assimilated to verbs مُشَبَّهَة بالافعال.

This resemblance consists, firstly, in their adhering to the noun, since it is their peculiar property to be prefixed to the *mubtada*; secondly, in a logical analogy, since they have the signification of verbs in expressing emphasis, like إِنَّ, or comparison, like كَأَنَّ; thirdly, in a formal analogy, since they are composed of three or more letters, the last of which is *meftûḥ*. If this resemblance to the verb be clearly perceived, the peculiar action of these particles on the *mubtada* and the *khabar* will be readily understood.

Now when it is said that أَنْ is *the lightened from the heavy*, that is, a contraction of أَنَّ, it is meant that أَنْ is used in the signification of أَنَّ; but this can only happen under certain conditions. When أَنَّ is thus lightened it preserves its *regency*, *i.e.* its grammatical effect, but its *ism* can only be the ضمير الشأن elided (the *ḍamîr as sha'n* is the affixed pronoun *s* in أَنَّهُ, for which see the grammars), and the *khabar* can only be a proposition, جُملة. Thus in the phrase عَلِمتُ أَنْ زيدٌ قائمٌ, the أن is the *lightened from the heavy*, and its *ism* is an elided *s*; the virtual expression being عَلِمتُ أَنَّهُ. This *ḍamîr as sha'n* is *manṣûb* as the *ism* of أَنْ, while the *khabar* of أَنْ is the proposition زيدٌ قائمٌ, which is in the position of *raf'*. In this case the proposition is *nominal*, اسمية, and أَنْ does not require a dividing particle between itself and its *khabar*, except in the case of a negative. But if the proposition be verbal, فعلية, distinctions are made. In the case of undeclined verbs, as ليس or عسى, there is no *fâṣil* or dividing particle; so also where the verb expresses prayer or imprecation. But in other cases a dividing particle is lawful, and to be preferred. In the case in the text the dividing particle is what is called حرف التنفيس, that is س or سوف. These particles are described as of تنفيس or توسيع, because they extend the time from the present to the future. We are now able to perceive the meaning of Ḥarîri's riddle. If س be prefixed to the verbal proposition then أَنْ is the *lightened from the heavy;* and the sentence عَلِمَ أَنْ سَيَكونُ منكم مرضى, *He (God) knows that some of you will be sick*,

Koran lxxiii. 20, is equivalent to عَلِمَ أنّه; the elided *ḍamîr as sha'n* is the *ism* of أنْ and is *manṣûb*, while يكونُ, etc. is the *khabar* of أنْ and in the state of *raf'*. But if there were no س the أنْ must be considered *maṣdarî*, and a *nâṣib* of the verb. It is hardly correct to say that أنْ here has no regency, since it *naṣbs* its elided *ism* the *ḍamîr as sha'n*, and places the proposition يكونُ منكم مرضى in the state of *raf'*. But though أنْ exercises a regency on the proposition it does not exercise it on the verb itself, which within that proposition is grammatically unaffected, and is therefore *marfû'*. Or it may be that Ḥarîri takes the view that the س entirely destroys the regency of that which precedes it on that which follows it; if so we must consider that أنْ governs an elided *khabar* as well as an elided *ism*; in that case the *taḳdîr* would be عَلِم أنّه كذا سيكون. Compare Bayḍâwi on Koran v. 75.

That which is naṣbed as a term of circumstance.– On this question it will be sufficient to quote Ḥarîri himself, who says in the *Durrah* that when one pronounces ذَهَبْتُ الى عندِهِ, he commits a fault, because عند is *mejrûr* after مِن only. Such is the constant use in the Koran; see ii. 73, 83, 95, etc. The reason, according to Ḥarîri, that مِن has this peculiarity is that it is the mother (the origin or principle) of the particles which make the noun *mejrûr*; for in each class of words that which is the original is distinguished by properties which the others do not possess. Thus إنّ, with the *kesr*, is distinguished from its sisters by the prefixion of ل to its *khabar*; thus كان alone admits a verb in the preterite as its *khabar*; thus, in swearing, the particle ب alone can be used when the verb, "I swear" is expressed, and alone can be joined to the pronoun, as بكَ. Whatever may be thought of this reasoning, the usage in the Arabic language is certainly as the author states.

As to the annexed noun.—The meaning of the author is that لَدُن, though its property is to be followed by a noun *mejrûr*, yet in one case is followed by a *manṣûb*, and therefore cannot be looked upon as in annexion to the noun following; it may, consequently, be said to have lost one of its handles or

links of annexion. The word لَدَى or لَدُن belongs to the class of nouns which are constantly annexed. These are divided into two classes; firstly, such as require annexion both logically and formally, and are never used separately; among them are لدى, عند, and سوى. Secondly, such as require annexion logically though not formally, like كُل, and بعض, and اىّ. Alfîyeh, v. 396: Al Ashmûni, Part II. p. 152. لدن is made indeclinable by the generality of the Arabs, because it has only one use, and that an adverbial one; and it only quits its quality of *ẓarf*, when it is *mejrûr* by مِن. Indeed it never appears in the Koran except after مِن, as at xi. 1; xviii. 2, 64. The tribe of Ḳays decline it; so that at xviii. 2, it is also read مِن لَدُنِهِ. The noun which follows it is *mejrûr*, except in the case of غدوةً, which is *manṣûb* by تمييز, or specification; it is also said that in this case the noun is the *khabar* of an elided كان, the virtual sense being لَدُن كانت الساعة غدوة. Yet the *jerr* is lawful, and is according to rule, the *naṣb* being the more rare. The Kufians teach that غدوة may be *marfû'* after لَدُن, through كان تامّة elided, the *taḳdîr* being لَدُن كانَت غدوة: Alfîyeh, v. 409. To understand the construction of these sentences it must be noticed that لدن is one of the nouns of annexion which may be annexed to the proposition, being, with the exception of حيث, the only *ẓarf* of place which has this property. Al Ashmûni, Part II. p. 153. Another way of accounting for the *naṣb* of غدوة is that it is assimilated to a *mef'ûl* by reason of لَدُن being assimilated to the *ism al fâ'il*, and the latter is so assimilated, since it sometimes has the final ن, and sometimes not; the ن so far having the nature of *tanwîn*. You would then say غدوةً, as you say ضاربٌ زيدًا. There are other explanations, but the above are the most satisfactory.

The regent whose last joins his first.—On the *particles of calling*, sufficient information will be found in the Alfîyeh, v. 573, *et seqq.* A distinction must be observed between *hamzeh*, which is used in calling one who is near, and آ with *medd*, which is used in calling one who is either distant, or in the predicament of being distant, as when he is inattentive or asleep.

The regent whose deputy is more spacious than he in abode.—Ḥarîri, in the passage of the *Durrah*, quoted above, explains, as he does here, why ب is to be considered the original of the particles which enter into formulas of swearing, namely, that it is used when the verb "I swear" is expressed, and also that the affixed pronoun may be joined to it. Among the *ḥurûf al jerr* ت is used only before the name of God, or his epithets, as تالرحمن and تَرَبِّ الكعبة: Alfîyeh, v. 366; Naṣîf's grammar, p. 191. The usage of و is explained by Ibn Hishâm, Anthol. Gram. Arabe, p. 88. It is a *ḥarf al jerr* in two cases, namely where it stands for رُبَّ as وبلدةٍ, *many a region*; and where it is the و of the oath, as والتين والزيتون (*I swear*) *by the fig tree and the olive tree:* Koran xcv. 1. Zamakhshari says (Anthol. Gram. Arabe, p. 100) that the primitive signification of ب is *adhesion*, so that when you say "I swear بالله," you mean "My oath adheres to the word God." He says, further on, that the و is a substitute for ب, and the ت is a substitute for و; thus confirming the judgment of Ḥarîri that the ب is the original. When Ḥarîri says that و has the sense of union, he adopts the opinion of the school of Basra, who hold that the conjunction "and" conveys only the idea of accompaniment, and that when you say "Zayd and ʿAmr came," it may be that Zayd came before ʿAmr, or after him, or that they both came together. On the other hand the Kufians teach that the idea of order is also inherent in the word "and," so that what is mentioned before it must be considered as prior to what is mentioned after it. This, however, is refuted by Koran xxiii. 39: "There is nought but the life below; we die and we live, and we shall not be raised again." Here what is later in time is put before what is earlier, for it is evident that when the infidels say "we live," they refer to the present life, since they are denying the resurrection. It must be admitted, however, that according to Baydâwi, "we die and we live," is interpreted to mean "one generation dies and another lives," which would remove the objection to the Kufian theory which is derived from the Koran.

Also the و is larger in dwelling.—The various uses of و are

given by Ibn Hishâm in the passage cited above. That it is prefixed to the noun, the verb, and the particle, while بـ is prefixed only to the noun needs no explanation. Its use as a substitute for رُبَّ, or with رُبَّ understood, has been already noticed. The rest of the text applies to such phrases as ولمّا يعلم الله الّذين جاهدوا ويعلمَ الصابرين where the second يعلم is *manṣûb*, with the meaning "Do ye think that ye shall enter into Paradise except God know which of you have warred well, *so that* he may know those who are constant?" Koran iii. 136. Or to such as لا تنه من الخلق وتاتيَ مثله, "Do not forbid a thing to men, and (in order to) commit it yourself."

The place where males put on the veils of women.—This riddle relates to the grammatical singularity which appears not only in Arabic but also in Hebrew and Syriac; namely, that the feminine numeral from three to ten is used with the masculine noun, and the masculine numeral with the feminine noun. The most reasonable explanation of this phenomenon is that these numerals are substantives of multitude, the feminine representing in the Semitic languages the idea of collectiveness. It is as though you should say in Latin "trias filiorum." The Arab grammarians say that as the feminine fundamentally belongs to the abstract numeral it is put with the masculine, which is the fundamental gender; and as the masculine is secondary in the numeral it is put with the feminine, which is the secondary gender. Naṣîf's grammar; Al Ashmûni, Part III. p. 99; Ewald, Ausführliches Lehrbuch der Hebräischen Sprache, 7th edition, p. 650.

The other questions require no explanation. The sixth riddle in the Thirty-sixth Assembly applies to the word سهما.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH ASSEMBLY.

Kerej.—The city of Kerej, between Ispahan and Hamadân, situated in the hill country of Persian Irak, was the seat of the

family of Al 'Ijli, a powerful Arab house descended from Bekr ibn Wâ'il. Kerej, according to Sherîshi, was sixty parasangs from Ispahan. It was rebuilt and greatly enlarged by Al Ḳâsim ibn 'Îsa the 'Ijli, commonly known as Abû Dulaf, a celebrated general, and a great patron of letters in the time of the Khalifs Al Ma'mûn and Al Mo'taṣim. A life of him, or rather some fragmentary anecdotes respecting him, may be found in Ibn Khallikân. When Ar Reshîd inquired of Abû Dulaf respecting the state of his country, and received for answer that it was wasted and desolate, spoiled by Arabs and Kurds, a certain person present declared that Abû Dulaf had had a chief share in this devastation. Abû Dulaf then promised that with the help of the Khalif he would restore the country to prosperity, which he did by rebuilding the city of Kerej.

Scorching cold.—نفح signifies the scorching or blasting by a cold wind, as لفح by a hot one. At Koran xxi. 47, it is said "If but a *blast* of the chastisement of thy Lord reach them."

Sorest torment.—The phrase جهد البلاء is derived from a Tradition of the Prophet, and is defined as such extreme suffering as makes a man desire death. Abû Horayrah relates that Mohammed taught him the following rhythmical prayer: اللهمّ إنّي اعوذك من سوء القضاء و جهد البلاء ودرك الشقاء وشماتة الاعداء Another Tradition makes the Prophet say that to be refused in one's need is *jahd al belâ'*. It is conventionally applied to great worldly distress, as hopeless indebtedness, or small means with a large family. The word جهد signifies energy or effort, and is used several times in the Koran in a phrase signifying "the most energetic or forcible of your oaths." See v. 58; vi. 109; xvi. 40, and other places.

Attendance at the congregation.—Sherîshi says that the cold in the province of Granada had a still greater effect on his countryman Ibn Ṣârah, for it prevented him from going even to prayer. The poet thus addresses the people of the place:

Sure we may fail at the prayer in your land, and even drink the strong wine, though a thing forbidden;

Since we would gladly go to the eternal flame as more gentle and merciful than the cold of Shalîr;

If my Lord were to cast me into hell on such a day as this I should say "How comfortable is hell."

The author of these irreverent verses was Abû Moḥammed ibn Ṣârat ash Shantarîni (of Santarem), a poverty-stricken poet of Spain, who lived by bookbinding. He died at Almeria in the year 517 (A.D. 1123).

And heeded nought.—For this word see Lane's Lexicon, حشى.

O people.—The metre of these verses is the fifth عروض of the رجز, the last foot being مقطوع. I have divided the translation into lines as if the measure were *mashṭûr*, in accordance with the exceptional principle of the *rejez*, but it may be that in this particular *ʿarûḍ* the verse is made up of two hemistiches.

Destroyed: caused them to pass away and perish. Thus, "I think not that this garden will ever perish," Koran xviii. 33.

My humped camels mourned the morning I made the feast.—However poorly the Arabs might fare when alone they thought it due to their reputation for hospitality to feast the stranger to the utmost extent of their means; and this was generally done by killing a camel for him, the joints of which were either roasted at the fire or boiled in large cauldrons: all who chose to come shared in the feast, and what remained was distributed among the poor. The eating of camel's flesh seems not to have been universal in the early times among the Arabs. There is no mention of its having been used for food by the Hebrew patriarchs, and it is forbidden by the Mosaic law: Leviticus xi. 4; Deuteronomy xiv. 7. At the proverb "Barâḳish has sinned against her people," Arab. Prov. II. 89, it is related that Barâḳish was a wife of Loḳmân ibn ʿÂd. Her husband's tribe did not feed upon camel, but a son of hers by a former marriage, going to visit his mother's family, brought back a joint of camel, which Loḳmân, tasting, pronounced to be good food. Barâḳish, hearing this and desiring to feed upon camel, said to her husband, "Camel us and camel thyself," meaning, "Give us camel to eat and eat it thyself," which words became proverbial, Arab. Prov. I. 295. The eating of camel which had been confined to Hijâz and Nejd then became general among the descendants of ʿÂd;

so that Loḳmân, who was a powerful prince and exacted tribute, destroyed the camels of his wife's people for food. Hence the origin of the proverb. Loḳmân is described as a person of enormous strength; he could dig with his nails a well for his camels to drink at: see the proverb "Stronger than Loḳmân," Arab. Prov. I. 701. This legend may be connected with the tradition which places his home in the Aḥḳâf, tracts of sand in the region of Ash Shiḥr, where such a feat may not be impossible. He was also said to be of boundless voracity, inasmuch as he ate one camel's carcass in the morning and another in the evening; "More voracious than Loḳmân," Arab. Prov. I. 134. This may be explained by supposing him to have been profusely hospitable. His courtiers were as liberal as himself. At the proverb "More gambling than Loḳmân," Arab. Prov. II. 938, it is said that Loḳmân used to play at the game of *maysir* with arrows, for portions of camel, as described in a former note; and that his companions were eight persons renowned for their generosity; so that it came to be said proverbially of liberal persons, "They are like Loḳmân's gamblers." These various legends point to the adoption of the camel as food by the Arabs of the south, under the influence of a powerful prince.

A spindle in nakedness.—The spindle is made an example of nakedness, since the woman spins the wool from it and leaves it bare. Arab. Prov. II. 160.

Warmth.—There is a tradition connected with the word دِفْء, which may be worth relating, as it exhibits a remarkable peculiarity in the speech of Ḳoraysh. Though this tribe is reputed to have spoken the purest Arabic, and the Koran is in conformity with their tongue, they are said to have frequently omitted the *hamzeh* in words which, according to the pure speech of the Arabs, contained it. One of these was the verb دَفِئَ, "he was warm," which they pronounced like دفا, "he despatched the wounded man," جهز عليه. On one occasion a man of Johayneh brought the Prophet a prisoner, who trembled with cold, on which the Prophet said ادفوه, "Despatch him," meaning to say ادفئوه, "Warm him." They took out their prisoner and

killed him. According to Ṭabari and others, the death of Mâlik ibn Nowayrah and his companions of the tribe of Yarbû' was due to a mistake of the same kind, since the Ḳorayshi crier of Khâlid ibn Al Welîd, intending to proclaim in the camp "Warm your prisoners," it being a cold night, said "Despatch your prisoners," and the soldiers fell upon the Benû Yarbû' and slaughtered them. An instance of this omission of the *hamzeh* is mentioned by Bayḍâwi at Koran xvii. 103, where it is said that Ḳoraysh use سال for سأل. The clear pronunciation of the *hamzeh* was called نبر.

Ṣinn and Ṣinnabar.—There were seven days in the early spring which were thought to bring with them a return of the winter's cold, before the warmer weather set in. According to Sherîshi they are the four last days of February and the first three of March. The two days mentioned in the text were the first two of them. The names are united in some verses by Ibn Aḥmar, quoted in De Sacy's commentary; they are also united by Naṣîf, in his Sixth Assembly.

An ample robe.—One liberal and beneficent.

Let him expend.—Koran lxv. 7.

Of his day: of his yesterday.—The meaning of these phrases is that a man must depend for approbation and reward on what he himself does in his own age, and not on what his ancestors have done in times past.

Bidden us to ask of thee.—The allusion here is to Koran iv. 36 and xl. 62.

Prefers even from his straitness.—Compare Koran lix. 9.

'Iṣâm, the son of Shahbar, is the exemplar among the Arabs of a man who is great by his own merits, and not by the nobility of his ancestors. He was chamberlain to No'mân ibn al Munthir, king of Hira, known as No'mân Abû Ḳâbûs, and in this capacity befriended two of the most eminent poets of the time, An Nâbighat ath Thobyâni and Ḥassân ibn Thâbit. The phrase in the text is taken from some verses of An Nâbighah, who says "the soul of 'Iṣâm has ennobled 'Iṣâm:" Arab. Prov. II. 745. Sherîshi, no doubt erroneously, attributes them

to ʿIṣâm himself, who was asked how he who was low of origin had attained to such high rank. Nâbighah, who like most of the poets of the Ignorance was licentious in style, had composed some verses celebrating in impassioned language the beauties of Mutejarradeh, the wife of Noʿmân, and indicating that she requited his admiration. This Mutejarradeh had been the wife of the king's father, after whose death the king had married her, a practice permitted among the ancient Arabs, though apparently not generally approved, since it was called نكاح المقت, the marriage of hate. It was abrogated by Moḥammed; see Koran iv. 26. Some say that Nâbighah had entered the apartment of Mutejarradeh; others that he composed the ḳaṣîdeh at the instance of Al Munakhkhal, her lover. The verses were repeated to the king, who was greatly incensed, and would have slain Nâbighah, had not ʿIṣâm warned him, so that he was able to escape by flight. He repaired to the court of Ghassân, but being after a time desirous of returning to Hira he sought a reconciliation with the king. Noʿmân was sick, and Nâbighah addressed the following verses to the chamberlain:

I conjure thee tell me whether the hero be still borne on the litter;
I do not blame thee that I enter not; but, tell me, what is behind thee, ʿIṣâm?

These last words became proverbial, being used when you ask information of any one concerning something that he has seen; Arab. Prov. II. 589, where it is made a woman's name, عصام. Nâbighah was afterwards received into favour by the king, and remained thenceforward on good terms with him. ʿIṣâm procured for Ḥassân ibn Thâbit the favour of the king by warning him that when Noʿmân spoke against the king of Ghassân, and asked his opinion, he should not join in disparaging him; for Noʿmân, though he hated his royal brother and railed at him himself, would not like a king to be ill-spoken of by a subject. These adventures, taken from the Kitâb al Aghâni, will be found at length in the second volume of M. Caussin de Perceval's *Essai*. It became a saying كن عصاميًّا و لا عظاميًّا in the sense of "Be like ʿIṣâm whose

honour was derived from his own worth, and not like one who relies for honour merely on the bones of his ancestors." An anecdote of Al Ḥajjâj connected with this phrase is given by Maydâni at the first cited proverb, and from Sherîshi in De Sacy's commentary. Whether the proverb, "'Iṣâm was sleeping at the hour of departure," Arab. Prov. II. 770, refers to the same person I am not able to determine. More on this subject will be found in the notes to the ḳaṣîdeh of An Nâbighah in De Sacy's *Chrestomathie.*

Al Asma'î has been already spoken of. He was celebrated not only for his great learning, but for his cheerful humour and ready wit; of which examples are recorded too numerous to be repeated here. Sherîshi remarks that Al Aṣma'î is to be considered an 'Iṣâmî, that is, one who was great on account of his own merits, since he descended from Bâhileh, which is the most bastard and the meanest of the tribes of the Arabs. It is but justice, however, to the great scholar to say that, according to Ibn Khallikân, no such name as Bâhileh appears in his pedigree, which the biographer sets forth up to 'Adnân himself. He bore the name of Bâhilî, according to this authority, because the wife of Mâlik, one of his ancestors, was named Bâhileh. Whatever may have been the disgrace of belonging to this tribe, Al Aṣma'î shared it with one of the most illustrious men of Islam, Kutaybet ibn Muslim, who conquered Tartary in the reign of Al Welîd ibn 'Abd al Melik. Ibn Khallikân, in his life of Kutaybeh, gives several anecdotes illustrative of the contempt in which Bâhileh was held. The Arabs of the desert, he says, hated to bear the name; so that a poet said, "It profits not a man to be descended from Hâshim if he have a Bâhilî soul." Again, "If it were said to a dog, 'Thou Bâhilî,' the dog would turn howling from the reproach of such a pedigree." The Prophet being asked by Al Ash'ath ibn Ḳays al Kindi whether all were equally subject to the law of retaliation, namely, that the offender should suffer the precise injury that he had inflicted (Koran ii. 173; v. 49) said, "Yes, even if thou slewest a Bâhilî, I should slay thee to avenge him." An Arab being told that a

certain man had sprung not merely from Bâhileh, but from the slaves of Bâhileh, immediately fell down and kissed his hands and his feet. Being asked why he did so, he replied, "God would never have inflicted on thee such a misfortune in this life unless he had intended to reward thee with Paradise in the next." This evil renown of Bâhileh caused Abû 'Obaydeh to doubt whether Al Aṣma'î could ever have called himself by such a name; since those who belonged to the tribe concealed their pedigree.

Cloak me.—Abû Zayd intends Ḥârith to understand the word in a figurative sense, that of concealing who he was; while the others believe that he merely asks for clothing.

Imbued with the dew of benevolence.—The word أُشرِبَ in the sense of being *imbued* or *penetrated* with anything is taken from Koran ii. 87, "They (the Israelites) were imbued in their hearts with the calf;" or they "were made to drink in their hearts" of it; which is interpreted to mean that they were imbued with the love of it, and the desire to worship it, as the cloth is imbued with the dye: *Zamakhshari* and *Baydâwi*. It may be, however, that the original phrase indicates a vague acquaintance on the part of Mohammed with the account given at Exodus xxxii. 20: "And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it."

Well done he.—The measure of these verses belongs to the third *ḍarb* of the first *'arûd* of the *sarî'*. The *'arûḍ* which is originally مفعولاتُ loses the تُ by كشف, which is the dropping of the last letter of a *watad mefrûḳ* at the end of a foot; it then suffers حذى, which is the dropping of the quiescent fourth letter. It thus becomes فاعِلُنْ. The *ḍarb* being also originally مفعولاتُ suffers صلم, which is the dropping of a *watad mefrûḳ* at the end of a foot, and becomes مفعو = فَعَلُنْ.

Jinn.—جِنَّة is another form of جِنّ. The expression, "Men and Jinn," is taken from the last Sura of the Koran, which is one of the two prayers for protection.

The silk of Paradise.—The people of Paradise will be clothed in green silk سُنْدُس, and in إِسْتَبْرَق, which is thick woven embroidered brocade. Koran xviii. 30; xliv. 53; lxxvi. 21. God provides these two materials, one fine and the other of a stout texture, that the believers may be gratified according to their fancy. The silk will be green because that is the most beautiful of colours.

A sharp cold was that which froze thee!—This is admirative or ironical.

Prosecute not that.—Koran xvii. 38. For the interpretation of this command see Baydâwi. The meaning of قفا or قاف in this passage is taken to be "a following up of a man or thing for the purpose of accusation or calumny;" so that in ordinary phrase قفا فلانٌ فلانًا signifies that such an one inveighed against or slandered such an one; it is also used of lying and bearing false witness. In a Tradition of the Prophet it is said, using the word قفا, "Whosoever shall prosecute or accuse a Moslem untruly, God shall imprison him amid the sweat of the damned."

Ṭaybeh.—This was the name which the city of Yathrib received from Moḥammed: for God طيّب "made it sweet and goodly," as the home of the Prophet during life, and his resting-place after death. The *laḳab* or appellation of *Medinet an Nebî*, the City of the Prophet, however, prevailed, and is now used as the proper name of the city.

My nature is to pass from prey to prey.—The word شِنْشِنَة, which is used several times by Ḥarîri, is made popular by the proverb attributed to a certain Abû Akhzam, for which see Arab. Prov. I. 658, and Ḥarîri's explanation to the Forty-fourth Assembly.

From 'Amr to Zayd.—That is, from one person to another. These two names, being very common among the Arabs, are used in stating grammatical or legal propositions; as we should say, "John struck William;" "John leased land to William." They are used in the verses of Abû Odayneh; Schultens, Mon. Vetust. Arabiæ.

More coated than an onion.—This homely but expressive pro-

verb is to be found in Maydâni. Arab. Prov. II. 385. A verb is formed from the noun, so that you say بَصَلْتُ الرجلَ عن ثيابِهِ "I peeled or stripped (literally, I *onioned*) the man of his clothes," that is, "I peeled them off like the coats of an onion."

Glory to God who rusted thy mind.—This is an expression of wonder.

Rent the bottle of thy storing is equivalent to "made thee incapable of remembering anything." I have rendered طبع on the authority of Sherîshi, who says that it signifies to cover with rust and dirt, as a sword is covered. The word is used in the Koran as at iv. 154; xvi. 110, to signify an action of God on the hearts of the wicked, by which He keeps them from knowledge of the truth, and abandons them to evil deeds. Originally, no doubt, the meaning was simply to "mould" or "stamp" the heart or understanding; but from these passages it acquired an evil signification, so that it is said, "We take refuge with God from طمع (sinful desire) which is akin to طبع (vice or that state of the mind which is reprobate of God)." The derivative signification of foulness, or uncleanness, is easily understood. سُبحانَ is *manṣûb* as a *maṣdar;* but see also Baydâwi, Koran xvii. 1. It is the word used whenever some indignity to God is to be repudiated; as that he has a Son, or a female companion, or partners in the Godhead.

Deskereh was a place between Ḥolwân and Bagdad, sixteen parasangs from the latter.

Ibn Sukkereh.—Abû 'l Ḥasan Mohammed the Hâshimi, surnamed Ibn Sukkereh, was an elegant poet of the fourth century of the Hijra. He was descended from 'Ali, son of the Khalif Al Mahdi, and was consequently of the blood of Hâshim. He excelled in light and humorous writing, as may be supposed from the verses in the text. His collected works amount to about fifty thousand verses. He was the rival of Ibn al Ḥajjâj, a contemporary poet of the same style; and the two were compared to Jerîr and Al Farazdak in a former age. Ibn Sukkereh died in 385 (A.D. 996).

Winter comes.—These are the pair of verses of which Ḥarîri

speaks in his Preface as having been taken from an extraneous source. The metre is *basît*. For the two plurals of حاجة, which occur in the first line, see Lane's Lexicon, and Ḥarîri in the Durrah (Anthol. Gramm. Arabe, p. 42, Arab. Text.) It may be necessary to remind the reader that the seven things here described as necessary for winter all begin with the letter *kâf*. A wit remarking on these verses has said that if a man has one kâf, namely كيس, a purse, he can easily supply himself with the other six.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH ASSEMBLY.

The "Spotted."—The Arabic rhetoricians have given various fanciful names to the artificial compositions of the later writers. The epithet رقطاء is applied to a composition of which every alternate letter is pointed, the rest being unpointed. Its literal signification is "spotted," like the leopard which is called الأرقط, or a hen which is white but has black spots on her feathers. The composition called خيفاء, of which the Sixth Assembly gives an example is one in which the letters of each alternate word are pointed, while the letters of the other words are without points. This name is given to it from a fancied resemblance to a horse which which has one eye black and the other blue; such a horse is called أخيف. Verses made up of words which are entirely without pointed letters are called ابيات عواطل; on the other hand, those which consist of words of which all the letters are pointed are called ابيات عرائس or "brides." The word عاطل is applied to a woman who is unadorned with a necklace, the emblem of female dignity; while the bride, on the contrary, is supposed to fully adorned, the rhetoricians conceiving that the words are adorned by the points attached to them. The explanation of Sherîshi (Assembly 46) that among the pagan Arabs brides were adorned by their faces being spotted with saffron, is not necessary for the understanding of this epithet. Examples

of these and of other kinds of artificial composition are to be found in the Forty-sixth Assembly.

Ahwâz was a city, or rather a district of towns, on the Karûn river, probably the Pasitigris, about fifty miles south-east of Sûs. In a note to Naṣîf al Yazaji's Assemblies, p. 8, it is said to have consisted of nine towns. It was noted for its unhealthiness, new comers being liable to attacks of fever. There is an allusion to the sugar of Ahwâz in some verses of Al Mutenebbi, quoted in De Sacy's Commentary. The explanation of the expression "the two markets" is that one part of the inhabitants carried on their business from morning till noon, and the others during the remainder of the day. Ahwâz disputes with Basra the honour of having given birth to the poet Abû Nuwâs.

Passing sombre days: literally, *urging* or *driving*. De Sacy compares it with the French "pousser le temps avec l'épaule." Chrest. Arabe, III. 268. The word is used of gentle urging forward, as a man drives on his camel, or a cow her calf.

Mouldering camp-ruin.—The abandonment by a tribe of its abode, leaving behind the ashes and other relics of the encampment, was, as has been noticed, a common subject of lamentation among the Arab poets; for the poet's mistress was supposed to have passed away with her family, leaving him disconsolate. For the words in the text see Dîwân of Imr al Ḳays, p. 20 Arab. Text, first line of poem.

Girded up of skirt; that is, actively; gathering up my skirt for speed.

Its streamlet . . . . the abundant waters; that is, "I left Ahwâz where I had no hope of making gain, and sought some richer place."

The shadow of the tent.—Ḥarîri says in the Durrah (Anthol. Gramm. Arabe, p. 27, Arab. Text) that ظل is applied to the shadow only during the forenoon, and فيء during the afternoon.

Wilt thou not?—Naṣîf al Yazaji, in his letter to De Sacy, says that the أ here is not interrogative. It may be like يا a *particle of calling attention*, تنبيه, see Anthol. Gramm. Arabe, p. 109, Arab Text. In the 37th it is said, using the *hamzeh* alone, "How!

at one time a *Temîmî*, and at another a *Kaysî?*" There it is apparently حرف الإفكار. Compare also 28th, p. 347, and 29th, p. 360. But I have made it interrogative as most consistent with the sense.

Took my seat.—جَلَسَ is used of deliberately taking a seat, as on a cushion or sofa, for the purpose of conversation, and thus differs from قعد, which is the mere act of sitting down. The literal meaning of the former verb is "he placed his posteriors on جِلس" that is, on rugged or elevated ground; and it expresses a change of place from low to high, while قعد expresses a change of place from high to low. Thus if one who has been lying down sits up, it is said that جلس; while if one who has been standing sits down, the word قعد is used.

Those yellow teeth; literally, his tooth-yellowness." قلح is the yellow or green filth which hardens on and between the aged camel's teeth, and which the Arabs periodically clean away. Thus it is said of any one who is instructed or reformed late in life, "The aged camel is tooth-cleaned." Arab. Prov. II. 84. The word is here applied to the yellow teeth of an old man.

Thy returning.—For this anomalous *maṣdar* see Lane's Lexicon.

Ṭûs.—Ibn Khallikân, in his life of Abû 'l Futûḥ al Ghazzalî, who was born at Ṭûs, says that it consisted "of two towns called Taberân and Nowḳân, to which belong more than a thousand villages." It was one of the most important districts in Khorasan, and distinguished as the birthplace of the poet Firdousi, as well as of the Wazîr Niẓâm al Mulk, who wielded almost absolute power for thirty years as the minister of Alp Arslan and Melek Shah, and of whose services to education I have spoken in the Introduction. He was assassinated by a Ṣûfî fanatic near Nehavend, in the year 485 (A.D. 1092).

I improvised.—The word اقتضاب has also the technical meaning of beginning the ḳaṣîdeh without the *nesîb*, or mention of the poet's mistress. Abû Nuwâs is said to have been the first to make this innovation, which was afterwards adopted by Al Mutenebbi. This was also called كسع and بتر.

The war of Al Basûs.—The death of Kolayb Wâ'il and the

war of Al Basûs form one of the most celebrated chapters in the early Arab history. Kolayb Wâ'il, the powerful chief of the stock of Rabî'ah, who at the head of Bekr and Taghlib defeated the army of Ḥimyar on the day of Khozâz or Khozâza, has been already spoken of. After he had delivered the descendants of Ma'add from the domination of Yemen he was elected by all the race of Rabî'ah as their Prince, and became virtual sovereign of Arabia. But his pride equalled his greatness. It has been mentioned in the note to "the guarded domain of Kolayb," in the Nineteenth Assembly, that he forbade the pasturing of any camels but his own upon certain lands. It is said that he asserted this right of domain all through the عالية, that is, the country between the Nejd and the Tihâmeh, and at the back of Mecca. The legend of his death is as follows. Once a lark flew up from her eggs on his approach, as he was walking in his domain, and he improvised in *rejez*, as has been already related. At Arab. Prov. I. 432, the verses, with a slight variation, are attributed to the poet Ṭarafeh: the word جَوّ signifies here *the wide part of a valley*. It is related that Kolayb found one day the lark's eggs broken by the feet of a camel whose footprints he did not recognise, and which he consequently knew to belong to a stranger. Now Kolayb was married to Jelîleh and Mâwîyeh, daughters of Morrat ibn Thohl ibn Shaybân ibn Tha'labeh. Their mother, Al Hâleh, had a sister or an aunt named Al Basûs, both of them being of the tribe of Temîm. Morrah had also ten sons, one of whom was named Jessâs. For greater security the descendants of Bekr by Shaybân, of whom were Morrah and his family, lived in common with the tribe of Taghlib, of which Kolayb was the immediate head. It consequently came to pass that Kolayb gave his brother-in-law Jessâs the right of pasturing his camels upon the princely domain. Al Basûs, the aunt, or the great-aunt, of Jessâs, and of his sisters the wives of Kolayb, also lived in the same settlement. (The name Basûs is explained by Ḥarîri in the *tefsîr* to the Forty-fourth Assembly. The milker of a camel used to say to her بُس بُس, in order to keep her quiet and make

her give milk freely. The action of saying this, and getting milk by it, is إِبساس, and the camel which gives milk when this is said to her is called بَسوس. See also Arab. Prov. I. 94.) Al Basûs had a neighbour named Sa'd, the son of Shems, of the tribe of Jarm, and it was his she-camel Sarâb which had brokent he lark's eggs; Jessâs having allowed it to graze with his own. Kolayb, when he knew that a strange camel had entered his pasture, said, "By the altars of Wâ'il! no camel of Wâ'il would have dared to outrage my clientship." What followed is told in various ways, and is too lengthy to repeat here. It is sufficient to say that Kolayb watched for the strange camel to come again, and when he saw Sarâb, he shot at her with an arrow, and pierced her udder. The she-camel galloped homeward, her udder spurting milk and blood, until she came to her master's door. Then Sa'd cried out with shame and humiliation at the sight, and Al Basûs came forth, and when she saw the camel she also cried out "Oh scorn! oh scorn!" and beat her hand upon her head, and improvised thus:

By thy life, if I dwelt in the house of Monḳith (her father) Sa'd would not have been injured, he the neighbour of my dwelling;

But I am in the house of exile, which, when the wolf assails, it is my sheep that he seizes.

O Sa'd, be not careless but depart, for thou art among a people who are as dead men in the defence of a neighbour.

Take my camels, for I am about to set forth, in fear lest they wrong my daughters.

She raised her voice while she thus declaimed, in order that Jessâs might hear her. He said to her, "Be tranquil, to-morrow there shall be slain a male camel, whose houghing shall be a greater deed than this wounding of thy neighbour's she-camel." By this he meant that he would slay Kolayb, but the Prince suspected nothing, and when he heard the threat of Jessâs he said to himself, "He intends to slay my camel stallion Gholayyân, but *less than Gholayyân is the stripping of the ḳatâd*:" Arab. Prov. I. 484; that is, to kill Gholayyân would be a more difficult thing than for a man to strip the thorny tragacanth with his naked hand. This phrase became proverbial, and is used when one attempts a task above his powers. Kolayb also

uttered verses declaring that what he had done would be a warning to the family of Morrah. Jessâs also improvised verses, in which he swore by the altars of Wâ'il (or of his people, for the word is doubtful) that he would maintain the rights of hospitality.

The slaying of Kolayb was on this wise. Jessâs watched his opportunity, and one day when Kolayb went out into the field unarmed, he followed him, accompanied by 'Amr ibn Abî Rabî'at al Muzdalif ibn Thohl, or, as others say, 'Amr ibn Al Hârith ibn Shaybân. Jessâs ran at him with his spear, and broke his spine, and went and stood over him. Kolayb, tormented, said to him, "Give me a drink of water." "Thou hast passed by Shobayth and Al Aḥaṣṣ," said Jessâs, alluding to two water-sources which Kolayb had prohibited to the Benû Shaybân: Arab. Prov. I. 249. These words became proverbial, and are used when one seeks a thing where it is not to be found. He then left him, and 'Amr coming up, Kolayb asked him also for water, but 'Amr got off his horse and despatched him, so that "To ask help of 'Amr in need," is a proverb meaning to supplicate a merciless person. The war or feud then began between the tribe of Taghlib, of which Kolayb's brother, Mohalhil, was now the chief, and the tribe of Bekr, of which the Benû Shaybân were a branch. Mohalhil could not believe that one of the family of Morrah had dared to slay his brother, and when Hammâm ibn Morrah told him what Jessâs had done, he exclaimed, "He is not a big enough man for it," literally, "Podex ejus angustior est quam illud," Arab. Prov. I. 607. But when he knew the truth he determined to avenge him. The real name of Mohalhil was 'Adî, and he received the former appellation on account of the beauty of his poetry, since Mohalhil signifies, "one who weaves finely." The elegy which Mohalhil composed on his brother's death is generally held to have been the first regular poem (ḳaṣîdeh) composed among the Arabs. Some fragments of it are preserved in the Ḥamâseh, p. 420, and the invaluable commentary appended to these contains a full narrative of the death of Kolayb. These events took place, probably, in

the last ten years of the fifth century after Christ. The war of Basûs lasted forty years between Taghlib and Bekr, so that it is said proverbially "More unlucky than Basûs," Arab. Prov. I. 683, and "More unlucky than Sarâb." In this war the tribe of Taghlib was in the end defeated; Mohalhil was taken prisoner and put to death, or, according to another account, forced to take refuge in Yemen, and the descendants of Rabî'ah were so exhausted by mutual carnage as to be obliged to accept a viceroy of the Himyarite monarch.

There was, it is said, another Basûs, to whom the proverb "More unlucky than Basûs" refers. According to Sheref ad Dîn, and the author of the Ḳâmûs, she and her husband were of the children of Israel, and God had promised the husband to fulfil for him three wishes. Basûs persuaded her husband to ask that she should be made the most beautiful woman in Israel, and God granted the request. She then, being greatly admired, ceased to care for her husband, on which he prayed God that she might be turned into a bitch, which also came to pass. Her children then, being in much affliction, implored their father to ask that she should be restored to her original form, before she was beautiful. The husband did this, and Basûs became as she was at the beginning. Thus the man's three wishes were exhausted without gaining any good.

The Kitâb al Aghâni contains a narrative of the war of Basûs; a short summary of the events will be found in the second volume of M. Caussin de Perceval's *Essai*. See also the verses of Jaḥdar ibn Ḍobay'ah, in the Ḥamâseh, p. 252.

Take omen of the raven of separation.—The crow and raven were looked upon as birds of ill omen, because in the ceaseless migrations of the Arabs they alighted on each deserted encampment to scratch and search for what they could find, and were consequently taken as emblems of departure and desolation. This image recurs continually in the poets. Various kinds of crow were distinguished, one said to be properly the "crow of separation," being of mixed black and white, or with a white breast, or, as others say, a crow with red beak and feet, while

the black crow was called *ḥâtim*, because it decided or announced separation to be inevitable. On this subject see Lane's Lexicon, at word بين. The crow is associated with death in the history of Cain and Abel at Koran v. 34. The word زجر signifies literally to *start* a bird by making a noise or throwing a stone at it, and has the meaning of taking an omen, because he who wished to take an omen from the flight of birds did this. If the bird flew towards his right it was a good omen, if towards his left it was a bad one. A distinction is made between عيافة and زجر, the former being to take omens from the names, or the voices, or the settlings of birds; while the latter appears to have been restricted to omens from their flight. The practice of taking omens by birds is alluded to at Koran xxxvi. 17, where the inhabitants of Antioch say to Simon and John, and another apostle, who had been sent to them by Jesus, "We look upon you as an ill omen, and if ye abstain not (from preaching) we will stone you." (They were all destroyed by a shout of Gabriel, with the exception of Ḥabîb, the carpenter; see Bayḍâwi.) The word تَطَيَّرَ is used of a bad omen; تفآءَلَ of a good one. The meaning of فأل is illustrated as follows in the commentary to the Thirty-eighth Assembly: "If a man be sick and he hear somebody say يا سالم, or if he be seeking something, and he hear one say يا واجد, or يا غانم, it is a good omen." There is a Tradition of the Prophet that he said لا عدوى ولا طِيَرَة ويعجبنى الفأل, literally, "No infection, no bird-omening; but good omening pleases me," that is, as I understand it, "Do not worry yourselves to escape infection of برص or جذام (the two forms of leprosy), nor to take omens of birds, but if you hear a word of good omen, rejoice and be thankful for it." The علم الفأل was afterwards used to signify a practice resembling the "sortes Virgilianæ" of Europe. The Koran was opened and a certain line, as the seventh on the right hand side, was read. Then seven leaves would be turned, and the seventh line on the left hand side would be read. Whatever the inquirer could gather from a certain number

of passages obtained in this manner was supposed to indicate the future.

The Arabs had, from early times, many forms of soothsaying and augury. Not only was the flight of birds or the track of beasts ominous, but certain animals were supposed to indicate misfortune. Thus, when Imr al Ḳays received the poisoned shirt from Cæsar he went forth and saw a wild ass lying in his path. He knew then that he was to die, and when his companions congratulated him on the gift, he merely replied, "Why lay down the wild ass?" which became proverbial. Arab. Prov. II. 204. See also "More unlucky than the crow of separation;" than "the bird الأُخَيْلُ," that is, the green wood-pecker, *picus viridis;* than طير العراقيب. Arab. Prov. I. 694-5. When a man going from home desired to be assured whether his wife would remain faithful to him he secretly bound the twigs of a tree together. If, on his return, he found them as he left them he knew that she was virtuous; if they had loosened themselves he concluded that she was faithless. This knot was called رتم; or رتم was the name of the plant, the *broom,* which was usually tied. It is described as useless at Arab. Prov. II. 716. The discovery of a thief by the twisting of a pitcher was also known among them. Arab. Prov. II. 115. Often the omen or divination depended on *tejnîs* or paronomasia, غراب itself having the same root of غُرْبَة. Thus بانة, the ben-tree, was ominous of separation from its relation to بين. Compare the names هُدهُد, and عقاب, and حمام. Arab. Prov. I. 697.

The shoes of Ḥonayn.—This saying was explained at Assembly Ten.

The story.—For قَصَص see Zamakhshari on Koran xii. 3, in Anthol. Gramm. Arabe, p. 124, Arab. Text.

The Tales of Pleasure after Pain.—This was a celebrated collection of anecdotes.

How various are thy wiles.—I have read احول, as corresponding more closely with the first *ḳarîneh.*

A spotted Address.—It has been mentioned that the letters of this composition are alternately pointed and unpointed.

There are several peculiarities to be noticed. The *teshdîd* and the conjoined *lam-elif* are naturally made single letters. Naṣîf al Yazaji, in his epistle to De Sacy, falls into a mistake through an excess of critical acumen. De Sacy, in noticing the latter-named peculiarity, had said that Ḥarîri made "the word ﻻ" a single letter, on which Naṣîf observes that ﻻ is not a word, but merely one of the letters of the alphabet, which is not كلمة because it has no meaning. But De Sacy is strictly accurate, since he means that not only is ﻻ made one letter when it forms part of a word, as in لخلاق, at the beginning of the composition, but that the word ﻻ, *not*, is made a single letter, as in the fourth line of the second piece of verse. Naṣîf then goes on to say that ﻻ is rightly called a single letter, because it is the soft *elif*, as in كتاب, a letter that cannot be uttered by itself, and requires ل to be joined to it in order to make it pronounceable. In this he refers to the opinion of some, that the soft or quiescent *elif*, which is merely a letter of prolongation, and to be distinguished from *hamzeh*, as I shall notice presently, is really named ﻻ, and that this is the ﻻ which is reckoned between و and ى, the *lam* being prefixed to the *elif*, because the latter cannot begin a word, and therefore cannot begin its own name. If this be true, and if the early grammarians did thus place the three weak letters at the end of the alphabet together, while they kept *hamzeh* at the beginning, it must be acknowledged that the true meaning of this accurate and scientific distinction was eventually lost, and that lexicographers, as well as the vulgar, looked upon the *lam* as an essential part of the double letter, since, in indices of *shawâhid*, or the like, verses beginning, for instance, with ﻻ, *not*, are to be found under this heading. They treated *lam-elif* as a single letter merely because it formed a single character in writing.

A more important peculiarity in this composition is that the author treats the letter which bears the sign of *hamzeh*, in such words as حبآئه and نائل, as a ي, and makes it a pointed letter. The true nature of this letter has been the subject of many discussions among the grammarians, which must have been well

known to Ḥarîri, who has criticised with such minuteness the faults in orthography committed by his contemporaries. The existence of such a letter as *hamzeh*, or the Hebrew *aleph*, is due to the strong and energetic pronunciation of the Semitic nations. In Arabic it may be said that there is no letter precisely equivalent to the corresponding letter in the softly uttered speech of England or France. For instance بـ, though formed by the same action of the mouth as our B, is uttered with a stronger compression and a more rapid separation of the lips, and so of all the other letters. For this reason the pronunciation of Arabic by Europeans, even when they have a fair notion of the language, is almost unintelligible to natives, since the former utter an incomplete sound, particularly at the ends of syllables. For instance, in pronouncing بَدَلٌ, without the *tanwîn*, they seem only half to sound the بـ, and almost to drop the ل altogether; the true Arabic pronunciation might be represented by *bbedelll*. From this habit of forcible utterance it comes to pass that when a word begins with a sound corresponding to our vowels, the Arabs necessarily utter it with the prefixion of a slight guttural, or rather faucial, sound. We can understand this by uttering energetically, and, as it were, jerking from the mouth, some English word beginning with a vowel, as *and, ill, out*. The more energetically we do this the more we are conscious of the prefixion of a very decided faucial to the initial vowel. This faucial is the Arabic *hamzeh*. It has been stated by European scholars of the highest authority, to differ from whom seems like presumption, that the *hamzeh* corresponds to the *spiritus lenis* in Greek words, and may be represented by the H in such French words as *habit, homme*. But such a description is, I must think, far from accurate. The *spiritus lenis* I conceive to have been a purely negative sign, denoting only the absence of aspiration, and to say that the *hamzeh* may be represented by the H in *habit* and *homme*, gives the idea that it has no value at all, since *l' habit* and *l' homme* are pronounced precisely as if they were written *l' abit, l' omme*. If the *spiritus lenis* in ἄνθρωπος and ἔργον had been a definite letter,

like *hamzeh*, it would never have allowed itself to be eliminated or destroyed, as in ὦ ἄνθρωπε and κακοῦργος. If it is to be illustrated by analogies from European pronunciation it may best be compared with the slight faucial sound which is interposed between two words the first of which ends and the second begins with A, in order to avoid an inelegant confusion of the two. Thus, in pronouncing *mœnia alta*, we must either make a pause after the first word, or prefix a slight faucial, which is *hamzeh*, to the second, in order that one may not run into the other. A Londoner of the lower class uses the letter R for this purpose, and, in pronouncing the name of Julia Adams, will say Juliar Adams, but the educated make use of a sound which is equivalent to the Arabic *hamzeh*, or the Hebrew *aleph*. In fact *hamzeh* is not only a letter but a consonant, with a distinct and definite value, as is sufficiently proved by its pronunciation in words like فأل and مأمون, where it certainly bears no resemblance at all to the *spiritus lenis* or to a silent H. *Hamzeh* is, indeed, only a feebly uttered ع, and bears the same relation to ء which ع bears to ح.

From this prefixion of *hamzeh* to vowel sounds it came to pass that when the *tanwîn* was affixed to a word ending with *elif* lengthened, the *hamzeh* appeared in the *tanwîn*, thus جِبَآءً. Similarly where, in the changes produced by declension, a syllable is deprived of its consonant and remains only a *ḥarakeh* or motion of the voice (as we should say a vowel), *hamzeh* prefixes itself to it. Thus in قائلٌ, نائلٌ, where the second syllable is really consonantless through the euphonious dropping of the radical و, and has become a mere *kesr*, the *hamzeh* steps in and consonants the syllable to make it pronounceable. Similarly, in صحائف the plural of صحيفة, the augmentative ى being elided, its place is supplied by *hamzeh*. In رسائل, the plural of رسالة, the principle is slightly different. There the *elif* in the singular, which is augmentative, is the quiescent *elif* (الهادئة or الساكنة), which is a mere sound of prolongation after a *fetḥah*; and this is the letter which becomes *hamzeh* in the plural, since the *elif* which appears in the plural is the *elif of the plural*, as in مساجد.

Hence, strictly speaking, in all these cases the syllable in question has for its consonant *hamzeh;* and the *yâ*, written properly without points, is equivalent to the sign of *kesreh*, and indicates only the motion or vowel of the *hamzeh*.

The distinct utterance of *hamzeh* in the middle of words was, however, not strictly observed. The lightening, تخفيف, of a word by the conversion of *hamzeh* into *elif*, or *waw*, or *yâ*, according to the *ḥarakeh* which attached to it was not inconsistent with pureness of speech. To observe the *hamzeh* carefully was called تحقيق or تثقيل. The ordinary writing of the *hamzeh* in such words as those instanced above was in accordance with the principle of *tekhfîf*, as if *hamzeh* in these cases had something of the sound of *yâ*, as indeed becomes sensible when the word is quickly uttered. But the learned in penmanship wrote the *yâ* without points in order to show that the letter was not a real *yâ*; the common people only writing it with points. In one case the *hamzeh* became a real *yâ* through this *tekhfîf;* this was when it had *feṭḥah*, while the letter before it had *kesreh*. Thus مِيرَة *enmity*, فِيئَة *a band*, where it will be perceived that in the pronunciation the *hamzeh* is almost necessarily overwhelmed by the sound of *yâ*, which is projected on to it from the *kesr* of the preceding syllable. We may now perceive why Ḥarîri in this composition took the liberty of treating as a pointed letter the *yâ*, over which the *hamzeh* is written. In using the word بَرِىَ, which is more accurately بَرِئَ, he avails himself of the rule above stated, that *hamzeh* with *feṭḥah* after a letter with *kesreh* becomes pure *yâ*. In the other cases he permits himself a greater license; but it is justified by the written character used, and the modification in the nature of *hamzeh* which that character, in the opinion of some, represented. It will be observed that in يُلائِمُ he treats the radical *hamzeh* as if it were *yâ*.

Replacing, consuming.—This is said of a powerful and generous person, with the meaning that he replaces by forays on his enemies the wealth which he lavishes in largesses to his friends. A poet says "Replace and consume; wealth is but a loan."

The Arabs say to him who has put on a new garment, "Wear out, and replace, and praise the Clother," meaning God (Lane's Lexicon, at خلف). The metre of the verses is *khafîf*. See Tenth Assembly.

The chaplets of his honour are self-strung; that is, his achievements inspire the poet's verses, and, as it were, string them into a composition without labour on the poet's part.

Makes gain by beguiling him; that is, gains so much that he may be said to cheat his patron. In the next set of verses خَلّاب is used in a good sense.

And therefore is he loved.—Metre *kâmil*.

The hero of the time.—For an explanation of the word قريع see commentary on a verse of Ta'abbaṭa Sherran, in Ḥamâseh, p. 33. It may be rendered *temporis admissarius*, having a signification like فحل. Compare كبش at beginning of 49th.

Contends in honour.—The *munâfarah* or trial of superiority in birth or rank has been described in a former note.

Prepares fatigue for him who shall rule after him.—His merits are such that his successor must exert himself greatly to escape disparagement in comparison with him. In the Thirty-seventh Assembly the author says, "His clemency brings contempt on those who have gone before, and his justice fatigues those who come after." The editors of the second edition of De Sacy's Ḥarîri have printed this line in the commentary to the 26th with great inaccuracy; thus قَبلُهُ, بعدُهُ, which is not Arabic. Such carelessness is the more inexcusable as the line is given correctly by De Sacy in the text of the 37th. They commit a similar error at Vol. I. pp. 279 and 348, and in other places.

May he never become void.—The verses are of the second *'arûḍ* of the *rejez*, each hemistich containing مُستَفعِلن twice.

Ḳoss.—The orator whose name is generally opposed to Bâḳil is Saḥbân; it is noticed by Sherîshi that the rule of the present composition forbids the mention of him, since it requires that the alternate letters should be pointed. Ḳoss, bishop of Najrân in Yemen, is one of the examples of eloquence among the Arabs. Christianity was professed in that city by the Benû 'l

Ḥârith ibn Ka'b, and Ḳoss ibn Sâ'idet al Îyâdî flourished as a preacher in the early days of Moḥammed. Various innovations are attributed to him, as that he was the first who preached from an eminence, as a pulpit; and the first who in preaching leaned on a sword or staff; he was also the first who used the phrase امّا بعد; the first who inscribed letters with the formula, "From Such-a-one to Such-a-one;" the first who asserted the Resurrection, though without having a certain knowledge of it (inasmuch as Islam had not been preached); and the first who established the legal principle that it is incumbent on the plaintiff who demands a debt to produce proofs, and on the defendant to deny by oath. From these traditions it would seem that he was a man of ability and education, and exercised much influence on his contemporaries. The Prophet, before he received his mission, met Ḳoss at the fair of 'Okâẓ, and heard him preach. In the year before Moḥammed's death deputies of the Benû Îyâd came to Medina, and the Prophet asked them concerning Ḳoss. They replied that he was dead. Moḥammed then said that he had heard him preach at 'Okâẓ, and one of the deputies repeated a *khoṭbah* of the bishop in rhymed prose and verse. It is said proverbially, "More eloquent than Ḳoss" (Arab. Prov. I. 189).

Come off with the reward.—Perhaps it would be better to read نَآ "rise," as in the 12th, "He rose up with that by which to mend his poverty," since نَآ is always used in the Koran in a bad sense, as "They returned with anger from God," ii. 58; "I would rather that thou return laden with my guilt (or the guilt of killing me) and thy guilt," Abel to Cain, v. 32.

A few years.—This expression is used at Koran xii. 42, "He (Joseph) remained in the prison some (or a few) years." The word بضع is generally interpreted to mean a number more than two and less than ten. Compare Bayḍâwi on نَفَر and رهط at Koran xxvii. 49; also Ḥarîri in the Durrah, Anthol. Gramm. Arabe, p. 41, Arab. Text.

Praise to God.—The *naṣb* of حمد as a *maṣdar* after an

elided verb is the fundamental phrase. For the reason of the *raf'* see Baydâwi, Koran i. 1.

Cool of eye; a common expression for content and tranquillity. According to Al Aṣma'î the expression "God cool thine eye" signifies "God make thy tears cool;" since, as he asserts, the tears of joy are cool, while those of grief are hot. Abû 'Amr ash Shaybâni says that its meaning is "God give thee sleep that thou may not heat thine eye in watching;" commentary to Mo'allaḳah of 'Amr ibn Kulthûm, v. 11. In the Twenty-seventh Assembly it is said of a scorching noon that it was "hotter than a childless mother's tear."

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION.

The Pearl of the Diver.—This, the title of Al Ḥarîri's grammatical work, may perhaps better be given simply as "The Pearl," درّة الغوّاص being a phrase applied to the sea-pearl, which is brought up from the depths by the diver. Compare line 11 of the Ḳaṣîdeh of Omayyet ibn Abî 'Â'ith in the Dîwân of the Huthalîyûn, p. 177, Kosegarten's edition.

Rustem and Isfendiar and the Chosroes.—There are other indications that the ancient historical legends of the Persians were known to the Arabs at an early time. The Chosroes especially referred to would be the heroic monarch Kai-Khosru, who holds in the romance of Iran the position of Arthur or Charlemagne in that of Europe. His war with Afrasiab, king of Turan, and the adventures of the *Pahlavans* Rustem, Tûs, Guderz, Guiw, and others, form the grandest and most poetical section of the work of Firdousi. For the story of An Naḍr, see *Sîrat ar Resûl*, p. 191.

John Tzetzes.—The learned Byzantine refers in his Chiliads

to the work of Lycophron, his own labours on it, and the misbehaviour of a rival scholar. In his City Verse he relates:

Πολλὰ μὲν συνεγράψατο δράματα, τραγῳδίας,
Καὶ βίβλον, ἣν ἐπέγραψεν τὴν κλῆσιν Ἀλεξάνδραν,
Εἰς ἣν ὁ Τζέτζης ἔγραψεν ἐξήγησιν, καὶ ἄλλας.
Ταύτην δὲ τὴν ἐξήγησιν ἐσφετερίζετό τις,
Οὐχὶ τὴν βίβλον παρ' αὐτοῦ λέγων ἐξηγηθῆναι·
Ἀλλ' ἑρμηνεύων τὰ ῥητὰ σύμπαντα τὰ τῆς βίβλου.

* * * * *

Ἀπόντα καὶ τὸν Τζέτζην δὲ καὶ λοιδορῶν καὶ τύπτων.

Chiliades, viii. 483.

From the sequel of the narrative it appears that the impostor did not go unpunished.

END OF VOL. I.

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